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DIPLOMARBEIT

„Finding a place for humanistic English teaching
in today's Austrian upper secondary schools“

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Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, Mai 2013

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 190 344 299

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:

UF Englisch UF Psychologie und Philosophie

Betreuerin:

Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Barbara Seidlhofer

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present humanistic language teaching (HLT) and to show that components of it, although it is considered outdated, re-emerge in the newly established way of understanding and teaching English as a lingua franca (ELF). In an attempt to attain this aim I will first find a definition of the term *humanistic language teaching*, which accounts for the diverse uses of it and the assumptions made in a body of literature. I will then give examples of its practical implications and in doing so will reveal its strengths and weaknesses. Having developed a better understanding of HLT I can proceed by considering the social L2 requirements teenagers need to meet, and check whether HLT serves as a good preparation for those or not. Next, after having examined if there is a case in principle for humanistic language teaching nowadays, I will search the Austrian curriculum as well as an Austrian course book for humanistic elements and thus gain an insight as to if those are actually present and if so, to what extent. To gain an idea what the situation is like in other countries, chapter 2.5 takes Finland as an example of a successful foreign education system. After explaining why I chose Finland and what its guidelines of an efficient education are, I will also search their curriculum and one of their course books for humanistic elements. Finally, in the last part of my paper I will introduce a more recently developed approach to the way of thinking about teaching, namely teaching English as a lingua franca (ELF). I will point out parallels between HLT and ELF, which will suggest ELF to be a fresh approach towards language learning whilst having older well-tried aspects in it.

I am doing this investigation because I am very much in favour of HLT's underlying principles but at the same time I am well aware of its drawbacks and the hardly manageable implementation of it these days. The similarities found between HLT and ELF lead me to suggest that by using ELF there is a way of complying with humanistic elements which meet today's L2 requirements. This paper aims to inform my teaching colleagues and all interested parties of this approach and to demonstrate to them that a place for humanistic English teaching may well be found in today's Austrian upper secondary schools, through teaching English as a lingua franca.

1. Humanistic language teaching

1.1 Defining the term

According to the Routledge encyclopaedia of language teaching and learning, “Humanistic education, or the education of the whole person, has the fulfilment of human potential as its aim” (Grundy 2004: 322). This was Grundy’s starting sentence and it also serves as a good start for this paper to get a first impression of the subject matter. But how do the various scholars interpret this? To find an all-embracing definition it might seem reasonable to first take the word *humanistic* itself under consideration and then move on to a definition of the whole term. By so doing, associations with adjectives like *personal* and *proximal* are often drawn and one may notice that it immediately triggers positive connotations even before one has a proper definition in mind. It becomes clear that an isolated consideration of the two words forming the term is hardly possible due to the lack of context. The term is used in various contexts with a slightly different meaning in each of those. For instance, it is also used more specifically in human psychology. Therefore a clear distinction of the term used in other domains needs to be made. In the case of *humanistic language teaching* it can be said that this term is used in pedagogic contexts and by theorists and practitioners of the field of teaching and learning. Keeping this in mind one can assume that *humanistic* in this term is derived from a psychological school called Humanistic Psychology, which developed in the 1950’s. At this time the pioneers, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, introduced an alternative approach to existing psychological practices giving preference to feelings and emotions. This notion took root in language teaching as well and seemed to be the response to behaviourist teaching strategies and to accentuation of the cognitive aspect of learning (Kerr 2007).

Now the context from which this term derived and in which it is used is clear and this helps in distinguishing it from other assumptions. However, a proper definition is still desirable. In the course of time scholars have provided various explanations, have introduced sub-terms of it and have created methods following the HLT model, all of which slightly diverge. The following presents 4 scholars chosen out of the great mass of authors writing about humanism in education, whose findings seem to be most influential and an important contribution to the topic under discussion. This consideration shall show how different a theme might be approached and where the parallels lie.

1.1.1 Earl W. Stevick

Earl Stevick is well known in the field of education for publishing influential works over decades. He principally specialised in promoting The Silent Way, Counseling Learning and Suggestopedia with his attention turned to the learner's and teacher's role. As his findings more and more implied humanistic elements he is seen as one of HLT's pioneers. Those elements are personal involvement of the learner, rapport with the educator and a positive atmosphere.

One major point he makes in his book *Memory, meaning and method* (1976) is the following: personal involvement leads to retention. For this he refers to what he calls fact-fict communication. The name derives from the action of passing on either factual or fictional information. For him, real communication can only take place if there is a desire for information. One needs to have an unanswered question in mind to get affected by what the interlocutor replies. Reciting a memorized dialogue, for example, does not have an impact on the participants' mind, has no personal significance and thus is hard to memorise. The term *depth* was introduced at this point. The listening and speaking happens *on the surface*, it does not go *deeper into one's mind*. Experiments have been undertaken and showed that emotionally loaded words or individually preferred concepts caused arousal due to an increased activation of certain brain areas and recognised by a change in the probands' skin resistance. Those words were remembered more easily. Furthermore, it was showed that emotions do not only determine *that* and *what* is stored in the brain but also *how* all this information is ordered. In short, the learners' feelings and thoughts have to be activated simply for the pragmatic reason of making memorising more probable. (Stevick 1976: 34ff)

Easier memorising through activating affects is not the only reason which made Stevick become a supporter of HLT. Moreover, he believes that speaking skills are improved by yet another principle HLT stands for, namely by building up rapport with the educator. Developing empathy and getting to know each other's inner selves will increase one's pronunciation skills because it is said that the more sensitive one becomes to others' feelings, the more one will recognise and being able to incorporate the subtleties of the other person's speech into one's own. In our case, the student can more easily adopt the teacher's speech being the model of language (Stevick 1976: 54ff).

The last finding is based on HTL's call for a positive learning climate which enables the participants to form an intimate group. Stevick suggests that learners acting in such an

atmosphere will feel comfortable and more easily identify with their social role inside the group. These positive feelings will make them risk more, which means, learners will try out new constructs and move away from familiar core vocabulary because they do not fear embarrassment and destructive feedback from any member. All this leads to a greater learning success, especially to progress in fluency (Stevick 1976: 61ff).

Addressing emotions, making participants open and feel comfortable Stevick uses Tursi's wording and refers to as "the challenge for the teacher is to go beyond the mere achievement motives of students, and to link language teaching with more appropriate and more productive motives". (Tursi 1970: 87 cited in Stevick 1976: 98)

What has been presented about Stevick's findings so far seems very consistent with HLT principles. However, statements in his book *A way and ways* published in 1980 reveal that back then he was not yet fully convinced by all the underlying notions of humanistic language teaching. One of the important components of the approach is the learners' centrality in the learning process. In Stevick's opinion "... the teacher is the central and the most powerful figure in the classroom" (Stevick 1980: 15). Furthermore, he describes learner-centeredness as something fashionable rather than something to take seriously (Stevick 1980: 16). Further down on the same page he writes:

"We may continue to affirm that the learner is in some ways "central" to what we do. But we should at the same time remember that there are other functions for which our society, and our students themselves, demand that we the teachers stand steadfast at the center of language education" (Stevick 1980: 16).

He strengthens this claim by pointing at five major functions of a teacher, namely being the source of knowledge and being responsible for classroom management, goal setting, interpersonal relationships and enthusiasm towards the tasks as well as their value. Successful learning determines the fulfilment of these five functions and therefore teachers are as central to the learning process as learners (Stevick 1980: 16f). So back then he was not yet convinced of some notions like learner-centeredness which definitely form the basis of today's understanding of HLT.

Nevertheless, it is the same book in which Stevick terms his introduced teaching approach a humanistic one. But right underneath he writes a word of caution by listing seven hazards one needs to account for as only correct implementation leads to much success. Again, one of the most crucial ones to comprehend is that teaching humanistically means not being too learner-centred. A language classroom is a place where diverse goals want to be

achieved. This requires control and a certain framework predefined by the educator. Within this framework pupils are free to move but anarchy must not be the ruling situation. (Stevick 1980: 31ff)

1.1.2 Gertrude Moskowitz

Gertrude Moskowitz is known for her resource book *Caring and sharing in the foreign language class* (1978), in which she rather lies the focus on introducing practical classroom activities containing humanistic elements than on the theory describing these elements. For her humanistic language teaching is related to personal development, self-acceptance and acceptance by others. She sees its aim in “combining the subject matter to be learned with the feelings, emotions, experiences, and lives of the learners” (Moskowitz 1978: 11). The two parts, feelings and information, always need to go together in order to make successful learning possible. Her book contains an example meant to illustrate precisely the difference between gathering information about learners and engaging with their inner selves. From my point of view the following illustrates this point very clearly: Moskowitz shows the difference between asking pupils how many brothers and sisters they have and asking how it feels like to have an older brother, for example. The first question does not really involve the learners’ personality, its reply is just a collection of plain facts, whereas the reply to the second question is far more than a personal opinion, it is one step towards understanding the learners’ feelings and thus offers the chance to interpret their behaviour correctly. Not only teacher and other course participants get this chance but oneself as well. With the help of introspection and self-discovery one gets to know oneself better and only then is able to share these insights with others. This, in turn, enables us to build up rapport towards others and makes us recognise our interdependence, which, in consequence, leads to a warm classroom climate that is essential for learning. In short, self-discovery – sharing – rapport – warm atmosphere is the way humanistic teaching and learning should go (Moskowitz 1978: 14).

With the help of the so called Johari Window, Moskowitz explains how this helix could get started: Ideally, I should reduce the things others do not know about me by exchanging insights and their feedback will decrease the things I may not yet realised about myself. This has nothing to do with being intimate (Moskowitz 1978: 17).

As we can already see, the factors leading to successful learning presented by Stevick and Moskowitz are similar: personal involvement, rapport and a positive climate. However, in my point of view, the reasons why those scholars argue in favour of a teaching approach accounting for both the cognitive and the affective aspect of a learner are diverse. It seems as if Stevick sees the pragmatic aspect of HLT (memorising, adopting speech) whereas Moskowitz' idea of personal development and self acceptance is valuable on its own right. The development of such characteristics serves for more than an educational purpose. It positively influences social life and one's mental health which then might result in successful learning.

For the next scholar, Wil Knibbeler, the implementation of a humanistic language teaching model has again a slightly different focus.

1.1.3 Wil Knibbeler

Wil Knibbeler developed the concept of the explorative-creative way, which he introduced in his book of the same name. To fully understand his ideas it is helpful to remind ourselves of the history of language teaching because his concept is a combination of some traditional teaching approaches in which he sees humanistic elements. So to say, he picked bits and pieces from existing approaches and created something new. Due to a limited space I cannot retell the history of language teaching in detail but I will briefly summarise the main elements of each approach he used. These are the approaches he found useful for creating a new one:

The Silent Way (SW): This approach is the opposite of educational drill. The name derives from the silent pauses for concentration and mental organisation teachers shall grant their students in order to make it possible for them to create ideas, discover information and solve problems on their own. Physical objects and visual colourful devices shall help them with this. Additionally, the Silent Way aims at a high student speaking time and self-awareness for self-correction. (Richards & Rogers 2002)

Suggestopedia (S): This approach is meant to be combined with others because it does not clearly define teaching contents and techniques but how a relaxed and concentrated attitude, which is optimal for learning, rather than anxiety and tension is created. Music, a loose arrangement of the classroom, rhythmic breathing and a special intonation and rhythmic speaking shall lead to this attitude. According to this approach the teacher acts

authoritatively and even a child-parent relationship between pupil and teacher is eligible. (Richards & Rogers 2002)

Community Language Learning (CLL): Here the humanistic element is very obvious because the approach aims at engaging the whole person. Emotions and feelings are equally important as linguistic knowledge and behavioural skills. The teacher-pupil relationship is like the one between a counsellor and a client – one first gives advice and supports the latter. In practice it is intended to work like this: learner A communicates a message in his/her L1 to the teacher - the teacher translates it into the L2 – now learner A is able to repeat the message in L2 and addresses learner B, who understands the message because he/she has overheard the conversation between the teacher and learner A. The atmosphere in such a classroom is interactive and positive. (Richards & Rogers 2002)

Confluent Education (CE): This way of educating shows even more humanistic features. Affective components play an important role. By stating that asking ‘How many brothers and sisters do YOU have?’ is not enough, Knibbeler uses the same example to describe this approach as Moskowitz (1978: 14) when she explains how effective humanistic language teaching should look like. This shows the relatedness between the two. (Knibbeler 1989: 11)

Those four approaches are often termed as alternative approaches.

Additionally, Knibbeler takes elements from the Natural Approach (NA), which is built around five hypotheses: acquisition comes subconsciously and should therefore be preferred whereas learning has to be developed (Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis); students shall learn to activate their prior knowledge to be able to correct themselves (Monitor Hypothesis); the input shall always be slightly over the actual ability (Input Hypothesis); this results in the belief that some grammatical structures have to be taught before others (Natural Order Hypothesis); motivation, self-confidence and anxiety can either block or facilitate the input (Affective Filter Hypothesis). Again the approach does not prescribe anything concrete about what and how to teach, therefore, it has to be supplemented with other methods and depends on the learners’ needs. (Richards & Rogers 2002)

Finally, I come to the point where I can describe the 10 principles essential for the explorative-creative way and state in brackets where the aspect was taken from:

1. Exploration (SW, NA): students shall be trained in inferring unknown from known. Ideally, they should form and test hypotheses on their own.

2. Creativity (SW, CLL, S, CE, NA): this aspect refers to both, the teaching method (e.g. drama, games etc.) and the teaching aim (e.g. when it comes to producing new utterances).
3. Motivation to communicate (CA, CLL, NA): The students speaking time shall be kept high with the help of real-life situations they can identify with.
4. Affectivity (SU, CE, NA): Attentive educators will notice the pupils' feelings and can invite them to talk about them. This, in turn, will demolish barriers and involve pupils in communication.
5. Economy (SW): in-depth investigation of the resources available is preferable to the constant extension of contents.
6. Autonomy (SW, CLL): The teacher shall be in the background of the learning process and offer the students various situations of choice.
7. Level-appropriate input (NA): Although reaching the highest possible language level is admirable and this requires a permanent use of the L2, one must not forget that reverting to a simplified version or even the L1 is sometimes more economic, effective and therefore preferable.
8. Risk-taking (SW): it is a teacher's job to motivate learners to try something out even though they have to live with uncertainties and errors. This does not mean that errors are completely tolerated.
9. Self-confidence (SW, SU, CLL): this is a pre-requisite for language use and can be achieved through a positive learning atmosphere where there is neither too much criticism nor extensive praise on the part of the teacher.
10. Listening to oneself (SW, CLL): this last aspect states the importance of actively listening to one's own sound production and taking the teacher as a model for improvement.

For Will Knibbeler this is the best way of teaching humanistically, picking out the seemingly best humanistic aspects of other teaching approaches and thus creating a new one. (Knibbeler 1989)

As chapter 1.1.1 to 1.1.3 illustrate different authors make different assumptions concerning HLT. However, a clear picture of it has to be established beforehand in order to be able to work with the term in this paper. Generally speaking, there are indeed some underlying notions that apply to all of them. First of all, the drifting away from merely cognitive teaching approaches. Instead, it can be understood as the integration of affective components. To a certain extent the learners' thoughts and emotions determine the lessons' content and guide their development. Beyond that, teachers shall bring in their personality as

well to make personal development and a trustful atmosphere possible. Additionally, pupil's current learning needs play a central role and are to be considered more than prescribed learning outcomes.

1.1.4 Similar name, different concept

What needs to be pointed out at this stage is the fact that humanistic language teaching must not be mixed up with the term *humanistic education* and *liberal education*. According to Aloni (1997: 88) up to the 18th century both terms could have been used to refer to the same concept. Nevertheless, the concept varies in several aspects from the notion we call humanistic language teaching today.

To name one of those differences, the concept lays a heavy focus on people's development to become free individuals in society, who live their lives according to their own unconstrained choices. But there arises a dilemma at this point, namely on the one hand there is the call for not seeing people as parts of the whole but on the other hand people will never be full individuals because they share a certain language and a certain community. Additionally, students should be made aware of the conflict between one's own good and the common good. (Lawler 2004: 50ff)

Another difference is that liberal education is meant for everyone, also for those not being in elite colleges (Voparil 2009: 43). He further cites

“a liberal education is a practical education because it develops just those capacities needed by every thinking adult: analytical skills, effective communication, practical intelligence, ethical judgement and social responsibility”.
(AAC&U 2002: 26 cited in Voparil 2009: 43f)

Seeing it from a different perspective, liberal education may also be defined as being received by the upper class, a device for upward mobility and a ticket into the Great Conversations about literature, politics, economy etc. (Wolff 2011: 137ff)

1.1.5 Different name, similar concept

The term humanist(ic) mainly disappeared from the field of education due to incorrect associations of humanistic language teaching with psychodrama, Gestalt therapy and Neurolinguistic programming (NLP). As was mentioned in 1.1, the term humanist(ic) requires contextual information in order to be understood correctly because it is used in various fields of research. By the end of the 1990's it seemed as if too many associations of humanist(ic)

used in psychology had affected the one used in pedagogy too strongly and thus made it inappropriate to use further in the field of education. So in order to create an all-encompassing definition of the approach it seems obvious to take into account literature describing the same notion but using a different term for it (Kerr 2007).

Probably, the original meaning of the humanistic concept got lost, the notion in people's mind changed, especially with those who are not experts in the field but still confronted with the term, like teachers. Experts might not be that manipulable by influences from other research areas. It is their job to take diverse views into account but stay focused. Teachers, on the contrary, tend to be practitioners rather than theorists. They do not always have clear definitions of terms in mind but still need to fully understand a concept in order to be able to implement it most effectively. This is where the dilemma arises. People, in our case teachers, who, legitimately, cannot do constant research sometimes use and distribute terms incorrectly. However, the logical consequence of this was the implementation of a new term. So, works discussing the same or a similar body of thought published after 1999 often include the term *holistic* instead of *humanistic* in their titles.

One of those is *HOLA! Holistic Language Learning Approach for Kids*, a project undertaken by educators in several European countries aiming at creating strategies and materials to increase pupils' motivation by having success and fun while learning¹. Within this project the holistic aspect refers to the language, the situation, the teacher and the learner – all 4 components are considered to form a whole with *holistic* being a synonym of it. At least the latter of the four, the learner seen as a whole person, is identical with humanistic language teaching. Furthermore, the project's emphasis lies on emotions, willingness to share, committed partnerships and feedback, to mention only a few. – Yet another parallel between HLT and HOLA. Anyhow, the term *humanistic* has not been used once in the whole text. As the project has been conducted from 2007 to 2008, this might be a clear stand-off of the term's psychological associations or *humanistic* was just not suitable because it does not integrate all four components of *holistic*.

(EACEA 2008 http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_133919_hola.pdf)

The next article mentioned here is slightly less obvious. Its title is *The Accelerative Integrated Method* (AIM) and it describes a way of teaching vocabulary visually, auditory and

¹ For more detailed information visit their homepage <http://www.holaforkids.be>.

kinaesthetically². This time *holistic* is only mentioned in the sub-heading but *integrated* can be seen as a synonym of it. So it is somehow mentioned after all. The integration of all learning types with an emphasis on creativity in general is what makes this approach a holistic one. Although it may not be visible at first sight, a deeper analysis of this method reveals that there are definitely similarities to humanistic language teaching, namely the creative aspects of it. The students get the chance to express their thoughts and emotions via music and drama. A strong focus also lies on gestures. Newly learned vocabulary is complemented with physical expressions to stimulate both brain hemispheres and thus facilitates remembering. This usage of gestures is already known from a teaching approach developed in the 1960's termed Total Physical Response (TPR)³.

(Maxwell <http://www.caslt.org/pdf/The%20Accelerative%20Intergrated%20Method.pdf>)

Finally, Scott Thornbury's *Having a good jaw: voice-setting phonology* (1993) highlights holism from yet a different angle. The description of his holistic paradigm in his article's introduction makes clear that he is not referring to language users nor to learning styles but rather to morphology. He avails himself of a citation by Henry Widdowson to convey his assumption of *holistic*: So, teaching holistically means "to go beyond the sentence and to look at longer stretches of language" (Widdowson 1978: 22 cited in Thornbury 1993: 126). The citation is to be understood like this: In order to fully understand a statement's meaning one needs to account for the context in where it has been said or with reference to written texts the accompanying sentences are of importance. (Thornbury 1993: 126ff)

The presentation of articles discussing a holistic approach can clearly be a selection that aims at showing, on the one hand, that the concept of humanistic language teaching continued to be to a certain extent albeit termed holistic approach or under a more precise name. On the other hand, as the third example by Thornbury shows, *holistic* must not automatically be seen as the equivalent to *humanistic*. Certainly, there have been new investigations in the 20th century, which led to an incorporation of those insights into the humanistic model or to a rejection of humanistic language teaching by educators.

The following chapter offers the reader an insight into possible drawbacks of the approach.

² Learn more on <http://french.about.com/cs/teachingresources/a/aim.htm>.

³ See Richards & Rodgers 2002

1.2 Arguments against HLT

Each new body of thought, no matter how popular it is, will have its detractors and humanistic language teaching is no exception. Since the 1970's it has been a frequently discussed topic and there are obviously various critiques amongst the many publications. This situation is not one to be condemned because a product of high quality, whether it be a cognitive or a physical product, is better achieved when there are critics who point out the drawbacks which make improvement possible. Working intensively on the same issues over a longer period of time, also being surrounded by the same people and/or going to the same places every day might cause a phenomenon called *organisational blindness*. This makes us overlook things outsiders, people who would consider the matter from a different angle, would more easily recognise. Instances for building up organisational blindness are every-day situations like the routine of going to work or overlooking an old stain on the table cloth, which is not seen anymore by the subject but immediately noticed by guests. Moreover, one does not need to be a psychologist to understand that more opinions on a matter are always better than just one because our prior knowledge and experiences make us see the matter from a different angle. Thus, new perspectives are highlighted and this could lead to a change in assumption. Because of this, scholars should pay attention to other people's ideas and opinions, whether it be a lay person or not, because a more or less critical view can be valuable to progress and improvement. However, one thing has to be noted; criticism can only be helpful if the matter it arises from has been fully understood. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Critics, in order to back up their claims, sometimes refer to questionable publications rather than to the main works of a topic. Furthermore, some focus on one aspect only and criticise it without accounting for the whole. This point is open for different reasons: perhaps some authors feel the need to criticise on any account or perhaps they just really did not understand the notion to be reviewed. Due to the fact that such critics are more obstructive than helpful for the development and spread of a new notion, writers have collected the main points critics put forward and provided a reply. This is meant to explain certain points more clearly and clear up misunderstandings. One of those authors intending to clarify things is Jane Arnold. Her article *The Jackendoff 'sceptic' on Humanistic Language Teaching* (2001) in which she presents counter-arguments for some main concerns about HLT, is of great importance for this paper and has been summarised in the following paragraphs.

The first and most essential thing to make clear is the importance of cognitive learning in HLT. HLT must not be understood as considering the affective aspect only. A major principle of the notion is educating the whole person. This phrase shall make clear that both, the cognitive and the affective, shall be stimulated by the teaching. Furthermore, another argument rejecting the assumption that HLT is concerned with emotional development only, is the fact that there are goals of both kinds, linguistic ones and affective ones. One of them is the increase of students' self-esteem. In order to reach this aim a learner needs to experience progress in language learning. Talking about oneself without having the feeling of developing certain speaking skills will not lead to the aim of enhancing self-esteem. This is yet another point why the cognitive aspect, namely linguistic skills, must not be neglected. (Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>)

A second, often misunderstood, aspect of HLT is its demand for singularity. The answer is simple, there is no demand for it. Looking at Moskowitz' (1978) collection of humanistic exercises reveals that many of them are quite similar, primarily because they are all addressing the same topic, namely oneself. Therefore, they do not include all the topics students are interested in, need or which are prescribed in the curriculum. This brings us to the conclusion that humanistic language teaching can never be on its own. It can only function as a supplement to other teaching methods and other contents. Teachers starting to use humanistic elements do not have to dismiss everything they have done before. On the contrary, they should carry on with techniques and materials that worked out well and only supplement them with humanistic exercises or rethink some of their tasks in order to make them conform to HLT principles. Focusing too strongly on one approach can never be recommendable. The most effective teaching is always a mixture of different methods. The history of language teaching approaches can be seen as evidence for this claim. Approaches, which emphasised one aspect of language learning only, like the Grammar Translation Method or the Audiolingual Method, have disappeared due to unsatisfactory results. Considering other aspects of language teaching will show that a balanced mixture is essential in nearly every aspect of teaching and learning. For example, addressing all the four skills, writing, speaking, reading and listening, is more effective than just one or two. Another example would be the learning types. Successful teachers will always cater for the visual, auditory as well as the kinaesthetic learner.

(Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>)

Thirdly, Arnold (2001) writes about the empirical proof, which is not always given with HLT. This situation is often taken as a reason for rejection by critics. It is said that discussing a method's practicality and efficiency will never bring as accurate result as the practical test phase. I mean a method's value becomes visible after some time of implementation, depending on whether the teaching was successful and its use continues or not. For critics, humanistic language teaching did not succeed because it disappeared from the repertoire of practiced teaching approaches and at least this is empirically proven, which we will see later in this paper. Jane Arnold holds against this view that the empirical proof is often overrated because some aspects of life like human behaviour and language learning simply cannot be predetermined to 100%. Learners are just so different in terms of their culture and background knowledge and this makes measurement and comparability nearly impossible. So for her it is not the empirical proof of methods, in which every facet is defined, that counts but the attitude a teacher has towards HLT and the development teachers as well as learners experience during the process of humanistic teaching and learning.

(Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>)

Here is a quote by Christopher Brumfit Jane Arnold uses to back up her argument. Brumfit has questioned the testability of any teaching method because a claim to the contrary

“...can only be based on either the view that human beings are more mechanical in their learning responses than any recent discussion would allow, or the notion that we can measure and predict the quantities and qualities of all these factors. Neither of these seems to be a sensible point of view to take.”

(Brumfit 1984: 18f cited in Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>)

Referring to the quote, for Brumfit not only HLT, which requires certain awareness on the side of the teacher in order to perform it efficiently, but any teaching method is impossible to prove empirically. It requires the transformation of a teacher to a facilitator, from someone seeing him/herself as the source of information telling students what to do to someone offering learning impulses only and helping students to reach their learning goals. This transformation is just another aspect of HLT which is not measurable. However, this does not mean that there is not research going on in the field of humanistic language teaching. On the contrary, teachers are testing a lot but it is done in a different way. Reid is trying to point out this difference:

“No longer do we confine the term to work with statistical analyses and empirical methods (although these can, of course, offer valuable insights and information).”

Instead, teachers are observing, making notes, identifying and testing hypotheses ...using informal as well as formal survey instruments to collect information, keeping reflective journals, and sharing ideas orally”
(Reid 1999: 300 cited in Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>).

Reid suggests individual methods to be more suitable than empirical methods because of the diversity of learners. Teachers should rather refer to their own observations and insights than to a general hypothesis done by someone investigating the average learner, whatever that is.

The forth clarification Arnold desires to offer is referring to one of Gadd’s critical remarks. In his article “Towards less humanistic language teaching” he states that pupils need to be educated in a way which enables them to participate in social communities. He argues that the focus on oneself will not serve this aim. Instead students shall practice how to write letters of complaint, how to hold a speech or how to communicate in business negotiation, to name just a few. Arnold set up the article *Towards more humanistic language teaching* (1998) and thus offered a critical reply to Gadd. Her counter-argument is the following: All those tasks are appropriate if one is educating a native speaker of English living in an English speaking country because then it might happen that learners experience such situations and, as is commonly accepted, situations one has already been in are always easier to handle than unfamiliar ones. Nevertheless, most non-native speakers learning English as a second language have completely different learning aims and will never need to write a letter of complaint in English (Arnold 1998: 235ff).

This study and the evidence presented in it are concerned with exactly those students, the majority of English learners, the ones being non-native speakers learning English as a foreign language and predominantly communicating with other non-native speakers in a country where English is not an official language. Therefore Gadd’s argument is of no importance to an investigation like this, focusing on today’s Austrian secondary schools. All the other learners of English intending to work in an English speaking country or having extensive contact with native speakers and therefore being in need of training in the areas mentioned by Gadd will get it anyway because humanistic language teaching shall cater for all the individual needs. However, such training is not something that builds the basic education in secondary schools. For this, further education, like specialised lessons, would be recommended. I am not intending to say that Gadd’s recommendations of what to teach are unimportant and that there are not any non-native speakers whose goals are exactly those but evidence shows that this is not the case for most of the learners. Therefore, I do not consider his argument as a reason for rejecting humanistic language teaching. Particularly

because accounting for the learners' aims, whatever they are, is an important aspect of HLT's concept. However, the reason for bespoke additional lessons for learners with special needs is the one that the principle of catering for one's needs does not mean catering for future needs. Teachers must not see themselves in the position to predict what their pupils might need to be able to do in their future lives. The teaching shall be oriented towards what pupils are concerned with at the moment and these are various aspects of themselves. The learners' current reality is what provides strong justification for HLT. Scholars will never be able to create an approach which is suitable for all types of learners and cater for all their needs but this is not the notion behind a basic education taught on our secondary schools anyway. (Csikszentmihaly 1990 referred to in Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>)

The next point critics often comment on negatively is the language used by authors in favour of HLT. It is said to be dogmatic. In fact here are examples which show that those authors write academically and do not exaggerate or predicate unlikeliness on purpose: "Don't expect instant miracles..." (Moskowitz 1978: 2); "I have come to believe in these strategies because they do seem to work" (Moskowitz 1978: 4). On the contrary, Nick Gadd, an opponent of HLT, was using statements like this: "liberating the teacher from the inappropriate and oppressive role of nurturer of the inner self" (Gadd 1998: 227). All in all it can be said that there are authors writing unacademically in every field of research. For me, the way a writer formulates his/her claims tells a lot about how he/she treats other works and evidence. Too strongly formulated claims give the impression of the author's narrow-mindedness and overestimation of their own opinion.

The last argument supporting the idea of HLT, Arnolds holds against its critics, is one deriving from studies of the brain. Caine and Caine (1994: 90 cited in Arnold 2001 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sart6.htm>) note that "for teaching to be effective, a learner must be able to create meaningful and personally relevant patterns". Such patterns stimulate intrinsic motivation, one that derives from the learners themselves, which is much more effective than extrinsic motivation, raised by outside factors like the teacher.

This chapter brought some arguments put forward by Jane Arnold trying to counter some critique by scholars against HLT. It focuses on the four main counter-arguments, its claim for affective teaching and singularity as well as its lack of empiricism and academic language.

1.2.1 HLT is not for every student

Unfortunately, knowing about HLT's weaknesses and working against them does not automatically lead to teaching/learning success. There cannot be a recipe, a reference book with ideas, which claims that HLT's underlying concepts work in real life because there is simply not THE reality. The message I want to convey is that classrooms are not alike. They differ in so many things like the number of students, their language abilities, their attitude towards learning, the classroom setting and the relationship between teacher and student, just to name a few. So in order to be able to make suggestions for possible humanistic exercises, one needs to take the individual contexts into account. Authors might now respond that choosing suitable activities according to age, level of proficiency, interests and culture, even after an introductory training, belongs to a teacher's scope of duties, whereas resource books are meant to provide a wide range to select from. That sounds legit, but nevertheless, I dare to claim that I am not the only English teacher who finds herself in the position where adopting exercises for her given classroom situation does not work either because of disciplinary problems or due to the number of students. The answer to this seemingly big issue lies in Ana Robles' text called *Humanistic English Teaching – a secondary school teacher perspective* (2000). The text shall convince the reader of the rationale's superiority over the activity itself. For her it is far more important to have a clear vision of humanistic language teaching's concept than to apply prescribed activities without deeper understanding of the underlying notions. This conceptual knowledge and constant teaching reflection enable her to create her own, suitable activities. Ana Robles advises her teacher colleagues to do the same and, moreover, she suggests seeing English as an opportunity of entirely expressing oneself and taking part in the interaction as a whole being rather than considering English as a subject only. Learning about, from and with oneself and others is just one crucial aspect of humanistic language learning and this does not apply to students only but to a very high extent to teachers. Trying out new, own activities is one way towards this teacher self development. (Robles 2000 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jan00/sart4.htm>)

So the first problem of inappropriate activities might be solved by creating one's own and lying the focus on the underlying notions rather than on the exercises themselves. Nevertheless, at this point it is worth mentioning that besides the positive effects and only few drawbacks humanistic language teaching might have, it is still not ideal for every learner and teacher. It was definitely not created for people who feel uncomfortable with sharing

ideas, see it as a chance to change others' beliefs or see it as a therapy. Some participants or whole classes are simply refusing for reasons of unfamiliarity with this approach.

Richard-Amato (1996) gives some advice how to help pupils overcome their uncertainties: The best time for introducing a humanistic activity is when the learners feel tense, meaning when there is an important exam ahead of them or very spontaneously when the teachers notices a bad atmosphere in class. The first activity shall never be too personal. One best start with analysing a character from a novel than immediately take the learners' personality under consideration. But still, the content of the exercise shall relate to the learners' life. Another helpful thing to do is to practice vocabulary which will most likely be needed in such activities beforehand. This would be phrases how to introduces oneself, how to talk about feelings and how to declare affection or dislike. A few of the most important ones will be enough for a start and if the learners take the activities seriously there will soon be the need for more specific vocabulary. Concerning the role of the teacher, Richard-Amato suggests avoiding constant participation. As soon as HLT comes into play the role of the teacher changes from being the source of knowledge to being a facilitator supporting the students to discover their own learning process. He/she can also, if appropriate, slip into the role of a participant either to act as an example how the task could be solved or at the end of the session to share own thoughts and feelings without manipulating or imposing values onto the learners. Especially in ESL⁴ classes, tolerance towards different value systems needs to be a point because such classes are often built up by students with diverse social backgrounds. The teacher being a participator offers learners the chance to take over the role of the facilitator and thus work on their own social competence by helping others (Richard-Amato 1996: 236-241).

Generally speaking, a teacher's role needs to be adjusted according to teaching/learning goals, type of tasks or handling of material respectively and choice of topics anyway (Wright 1987: 124).

A further action of reducing anxiety could be setting up strict rules and communicating them from time to time to the members to make sure everyone has understood them and sticks to them. Actually, those rules are rather commandments: First of all, each student is free to contribute and may quit whenever he/she wants. All the group members need to listen to expressed opinions, respect them and can, in turn, expect the same when it is their turn. At the end of each activity the teacher needs to provide time for the students to judge it

⁴ English is taught as a second language as it is an official language in the country.

and give constructive feedback (Richard-Amato 1996: 236-241). These actions might encourage participation and reduce hostility.

Besides all this, educators need to keep in mind that each student is an individual personality. This means that all this teaching advice can only be a rough guideline because learning success is so much dependent on a person's character traits, personal and cognitive development, learning styles and strategies, goals, attitude etc. (Wright 1987: 117-119).

Nevertheless, sometimes personal reasons force participants to quit. I am referring to a letter written by an intermediate student of English to his teacher.

"I write you these lines to wish you goodbye as I am withdrawing from the course. Over the last six months I have undergone extreme pressure in my workplace without any time for myself, my family and my inner world. I was not fully aware that I was going through a situation of overwork and stress.

Over the course of the first week of the course you led us towards a both intro- and retro-spective search through our lives. At first I resisted but finally windows and doors to my inner self have opened and I have to go through them and forget about the English course..."

(HLT 1999 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jun99/stud.htm>).

The English lessons held in a humanistic way offered the student time to think about his life. On the one hand the aim of the lesson, namely to build up a student's English knowledge, had been missed because of his withdrawal, on the other hand the teacher achieved something much more important. What should be borne in mind is the fact that this adult learner had the possibility to quit the course which is not the case in the school setting. Therefore, high sensitivity to students who need repression rather than self-awareness in order to cope with what they have experienced is required. Language teachers are no therapists and have to accept if students do not want to open their inner selves.

Let us now move away from problems which possibly arise with HLT and consider examples of how successful humanistic English teaching could look like in practice.

1.3 Teaching humanistically

One of the most demanding things about the humanistic teaching model is its operation. Although we are searching here for a general definition, the philosophy behind it is easily set up. Educators, who agreed on teaching in a humanistic way, will not have any problems to concretise their conception. But there is often a lack of knowledge when it comes to putting these ideas into operation. For example, provoking a student's personal growth is a frequently chosen goal stated in schools' philosophy. However, there is no satisfactory explanation of how this could be done. Stating "A teacher's teaching style has to meet this criteria" (Moskowitz 1978: 6) or "Our students can choose from different afternoon activities and are free to organise a school ball on their own" (Moskowitz 1978: 6), just to name a few examples, is simply not concrete enough. These poorly defined goals will then result in false pretences, namely in the belief that those have been reached (Moskowitz 1978: 7).

So how exactly do we teach humanistically? As a start it might be easier to set up activities around one aspect of HLT only. Let us take *authenticity* as an example. This is indeed a major component of humanistic language teaching but without explicit definition. Various scholars define it differently. My assumption of it refers to Breen's (1983: 60-69), who appreciates a language appropriate to the learner and the social situation over correctness. This kind of authenticity, for example in sociolinguistic competence can be reached by rejecting prescribed scripts and letting pupils work out their own scripts instead. With scripts I mean the mental conception of which actions will follow one another in a specific situation. A common script for being in a restaurant might be: entering, finding a seat, checking the menu, ordering, eating, paying, leaving. But this is not the same for everyone and that is the point. Tarone and Yule (1989: 95f) refer to a study where Russian students were not able to develop proper dialogues because they simply could not imagine to ever be in the situation set up in the task description. Therefore incorporating learners into the task design is one way leading to authenticity and thus to humanism. Furthermore, Tarone and Yule (1989: 98) suggest to learners recording their own and other people's speech in common situations. The analyses of those tape records in class put the foreign language into the role of being medium of communication and topic under consideration at the same time. This is a way of creating authenticity in the classroom talk, which is often seen as superficial.

Christopher Brumfit's critique of activities like the one described above would be the missing wholeness. The notion of wholeness is what differentiates the humanistic approach from other learner-centred approaches and therefore must not be left out. The separation of

HLT's components into single instructions is what he calls the *humanistic paradox*. To avoid this it makes him believe that proper HLT requires expertise on language teaching in general and especially on HLT as much as experience in handling affective situations. Therefore introductory teacher training in any form is seen as necessary. This perception is in opposition to the assumption anyone could teach humanistically raised by some critics of the approach. (Brumfit 1982: 83f).

Workshops and books for self-study are offered on the market to familiarise with HLT's underlying notions and even more important their effective appliance. One major work highlighting the practical side of humanistic language teaching and offering plenty of ideas for the implementation of this approach, is Moskowitz's *Caring and sharing in the foreign language class*. It was published 1978 when the approach had its upcoming. It starts with a summary of theoretical aspects of the approach, followed by detailed activity descriptions. Before each activity the affective as well as linguistic purposes, the level of English needed for a successful conduction, the size of the groups and the materials needed are stated. This facilitates the lesson preparation. One notable thing about the exercises is their name. Many of them contain the words *I*, *my* or *me*, which already points at the personal aspect of the approach.

The following activity is taken from the book mentioned above and is intended to illustrate how the underlying notions of humanism can be transferred into suitable activities. It has to be pointed out at this stage that teachers shall not abolish their existing teaching materials at all. Those exercises shall just be fitted in whenever appropriate. However, the activity is called *Ego Trip* (Moskowitz 1978: 85-87) aiming at reminding students of their strengths and creating a positive attitude towards themselves. More precisely, learners practise talking in the first person singular of the present tense and they learn or revise positive adjectives used for descriptions of people. The language level of the task can be adapted according to the class' skills, as well as the size of groups but ideally groups of three learners should be formed. The material needed is a handout, which has to be prepared by the teacher beforehand and copied for each student. I have chosen this activity because it does not just address the learner as a whole person but also loved ones in their life. This means friends and family members are invited to help the pupils with this task. People outside the class are to a certain extent responsible for the exercise's success. Therefore it is important to allow enough time for completion. In detail, the students have to distribute four copies of the prepared handout. They may choose any person they like but those should

know the student well. The text on the handout asks people to write down several strengths the person, who gave this sheet to them, has. Preferably, sender and recipient of the sheet should discuss what is on there when returning. After all the students have their sheets back, they form groups of three in class and discuss the issue once more. They have had time to have a look at it by now and think about the language they will need to convey meaning. Formulations, which still cause some problems among students, shall of course be tackled in class. The aim is to find similarities and surprises in what people said about them and how they see themselves by using the present simple tense. Then students shall say if they feel any different about the person who filled in the sheet. Furthermore, teachers have to make sure everyone gets the point that they will not collect the sheets and check on them. People shall have the chance to express highly personal statements without feeling uncomfortable of making it somehow public. If the need in terms of linguistic skills is felt, so if the learners need further practise with present tense, or if they just enjoyed the activity, a written follow-up activity can easily be set up. As a last comment Gertrude Moskowitz advises to keep this activity until the class is used to humanistic teaching methods and especially used to express feelings and thoughts. A master copy of a list of words how to express feelings is attached at the end of the book and meant as an auxiliary tool for learners. (Moskowitz 1978: 85-87)

For teachers willing to hold a lesson humanistically, Moskowitz's book is highly recommendable. Although some ideas will have to be adjusted according to the teaching situation a teacher faces, it serves as a handy wide selection of exercises. Furthermore, although more experienced teachers might want to create their own activities, they can use it as a first guideline or an insurance of not coming off the track.

A question that arises at this point is the following: Is it really possible to create humanistic exercises for all the topics there are pupils need to occupy themselves with in their process of learning? Even for themes which need to be discussed but can hardly be connected with the learners' life. One of those topics for Austrian learners might be nomadic life. Without doubt it is important to learn about foreign cultures and their habits but from my point of view personal opinions on it is all a teacher can demand. For me, the expectation of emotional involvement seems too unrealistic for such detached issues. Probably this is what Moskowitz meant by saying "HLT is to fit in wherever it is suitable" (1978: 12). The recognition that HLT is not always appropriate and the most effective way of teaching is one step towards interpreting its principles correctly.

Besides having a reference book it can be helpful to have field reports of teachers who have already tried out one or the other exercise. Of course a positive feedback must not be seen as a guarantee for success as all classes are different but it can at least be a foresight of what to take care of. However, Cristina Ferreira from Villamar, Mexico wanted to share her experiences with HLS with her teacher colleagues by publishing the article *If I were a tree... an experience of working with humanistic activities and teenagers* (2007). There she explained how she set her pupils into a relaxing mood with the help of quiet music, told them to imagine a forest and afterwards draw a tree they have seen and chosen. Next, the teacher provided vocabulary relating to trees and positive adjectives on the board and the learners had to write down first person-phrases which describe their tree. Finally, the drawings were put up on the board and the pupils were to guess who the creator was. In the end they have not only learned words for colours, parts of a tree and positive adjectives but also learned something about themselves and about others. This is of course the best case. Performing this activity with a group of learners not able to meet its requirements leads to different, probably unsatisfactory results. An even worse case would be if the teacher did not overestimate the learners' abilities but simply behaved denyingly. A class not willing to change their learning style to a humanistic one stays resistant to its benefits

(Ferreira 2007 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/nov07/less01.htm>)

At the end of the task description there is the warning not to let them use negative adjectives and this is the one point of critique I have. For me, negative feelings belong as equally to oneself as the positive ones although I understand the ban of negative emotions from a psychological perspective. The preference one should give to a positive world view in order to make a content life more probable needs to be realised from early years on. Nevertheless, this order does not meet HLT's criteria. Wholeness cannot be claimed with the neglect of an important part which is present in everyone and needs to be made explicit from time to time in order to manage its handling. So Moskowitz' statement might better be interpreted as advice to keep the overall atmosphere positive.

A further example of how HLT could look like in practice was contributed by Maria González Davies working at a university in Spain. Her article is worth mentioning here because it describes how an already outdated, if not frowned upon, teaching method, namely the use of translations, can easily be adjusted to meet the HLT principles. Since the emergence of the Communicative Approach in the 1970's the use of the L1 in foreign language classes grew a more and more negative connotation. Maria González Davies threw a completely different

light onto the matter of translating from L2 into L1 and found a way to make this task creative, student-centred as well as communicative. In her article *Humanising translation activities: tackling a secret practice* (2002) she stresses the point that her new perception of translation shall not be a revival of the Grammar Translation Method. The reason why it seems fruitful to me to know about her findings, although most of today's language teachers reject the Grammar Translation Method or are convinced that the use of L1s in a foreign class room is ineffective, is the fact that it is, nevertheless, still used – often secretly, as the title of her article suggests, either unconsciously or on purpose. Sometimes it is simply needed in order to facilitate teaching or comprehension

(Davies 2002 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jul02/mart2.htm>).

This quote shall make the necessity of translations visible.

“Mario Rinvolucris: In the 70s, when I was a virtuous no language 1 teacher, I tried to mime the word 'although'. Can you guess what it looked like? It is clearly more efficient to slip in a quietly voiced translation into L1.

Michael Martin: When I translate the students understand almost immediately with a low % of usage mistakes. Shall we keep on avoiding the use of L1?

Mario Rinvolucris: I can't see why.”

(Davies 2002 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jul02/mart2.htm>)

Even Mario Rinvolucris, a pioneer in the field of humanistic language teaching, was convinced of its value. The assumption that it is not only helpful but also done derives from González Davies' research, which is described in her paper. With the help of questionnaires she tried to find out about the translation's connotation amongst teachers and pupils as well as how often and what for it is actually used nowadays. The results showed that teachers tend to have misgivings concerning the practice of translating in second language learning whereas learners consider it as an inherent part of learning. Most teachers believe the following points are responsible for the contempt of using translations in class. First of all, the percentage of L1 use is considered as too high. Secondly, it is argued that translations play a minor role in real life situations and such exercises do not account for the Communicative Approach's values, an approach which is seen to incorporate different language abilities. Despite all these misgivings it was found that it is still used by a high percentage. González Davies came to the conclusion that if translations are used then they should be used in a humanistic way. As an example for doing so she states the translation of advertisements and leaflets. Getting the meaning right rather than translating it word by word requires much creative work on the

side of the learner. Furthermore, with kind of tricky texts, problem-spotting and solving strategies as well as flexibility are necessary in order to fulfil the task satisfactorily. To include a communicative part of the lesson the pupils' findings can be discussed afterwards in class. This example showed how meaningful translations can incorporate the translators' personality into the learning process and was meant to weaken some teachers' misgivings about the matter (Davies 2002 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jul02/mart2.htm>).

In a study conducted in China we learn yet another approach to the implementation of HLT, namely *Teaching by Joint Presentation*, or in short TJP. This term refers to a method where the subject matter is presented by both, teacher and students. Such TJP lessons have been conducted by English literature students and their teachers in a university in Hunan Province, China. The learners were responsible for providing the teaching content. They used the library, newspaper articles and internet sources to find out as much as possible about a topic. Obviously, the more people examine a subject, the more information is found. Moreover, each person interprets the findings differently, according to his/her prior knowledge, cultures and view of the world in general. Such an approach enables the learner to see the subject matter from different angles and hear diverse opinions rather than get spoon-fed by the teacher; spoon-fed with a selected teacher-version of the matter. Followers of TJP believe that there could be an interpretation gap between the teacher's and the learners' understanding of a topic. They see learners as independent thinkers and want to respect them as such. Furthermore, besides this demonstration and integration of diverse viewpoints, the research phase actively involves students into the learning process, which triggers motivation and comprehension. - Comprehension because the information gathering is an intense occupation with the subject matter and a series of reading comprehension tasks. Motivation is enhanced because the students feel inclusivity and the importance which is laid on their personalities. (Also the presentation phase has a positive impact on a pupil's personal development.) Besides others the three major phases of TJP, namely researching, presenting and discussing, are meant to positively influence a learner's ability of critical insights, reflective analysis, discussion skills, autonomy and, very important for humanistic language teaching, self-actualisation. The following quotes shall serve as a demonstration of positive students' feedback:

"Organizing information to develop stronger schema, monitoring mistakes, controlling anxieties, and asking questions to get verification helped me formulate my learning styles." (Zhang 2010: 123)

“I would never have realized that the participation of this project supplied me with a sense of adulthood, I’m the decision-maker of my own learning.” (Zhang 2010: 124)

“In the process of looking for answers to the curiosities, I found some interests for my future career.” (Zhang 2012: 123)

The originators of these quotes address different kinds of positive TJP effects, which show the methods’ variety with regards to those effects.

Actually, the Chinese case showed that Teaching by Joint Presentation does not always have positive effects only. Some probands of the project also expressed their negative opinions about it. This critique mainly included the freedom combined with the high degree of responsibility they suddenly had. As China is a country in which the teacher usually dominates the classroom, takes all the responsibility and educates in a teacher-centred way using so called top-down methods⁵, those pupils were just not used to this radical change in their education. For Chinese teachers what is taught is normally more important than what is learned. Therefore, also teachers expressed their doubts about TJP. The loss of authority and the lack of flexibility concerning their teaching style and the teaching contents is what seems to trouble them the most, especially the middle-aged and elder teachers. The young ones are said to be more flexible in their teaching methods. These personal objections might be different in countries where bottom-up methods are used more often. Besides the personal concerns there were problems of other kinds as well. One of those was the rare availability of computers with internet access. (Zhang 2010: 121ff)

The TJP approach is honestly speaking one that requires a fairly high language level and a certain amount of autonomy on the side of the learners. Those factors are not always given and therefore make it hard to perform. Furthermore it seems as if it is not always compatible with a school’s assumption of language learning or teaching. It rather seems to be a temporary project than one conducted the whole year long.

For this reason one last humanistic lesson is worth mentioning here. One that can be conducted everywhere, with all kinds of learners and no matter what assumption of language teaching an institution represents. Moreover, it requires zero preparation. A humanistic lesson exemplified in the Belgian Jonathan Clifton’s paper stresses the importance of the learners being the driving force of the lessons. He argues against the classic initiation-

⁵ Teachers following a top-down approach provide their pupils with an overview of the matter before they go into detail. It stands in contrast to the bottom-up approach standing for a teaching style in which the examining of the components build up the whole. E.g. The students contribute to a topic and the teacher groups their ideas systematically.

response-feedback (IRF) pattern. His understanding of this pattern is the following: the teacher asks a question, a student answers the question and is then evaluated by the teacher. A more efficient way would be to let the student initiate and guide the conversation in order to make it more relevant for his or her life. Students taking the first turn in a sequence of turns have the power to develop the conversation in a preferable way and chose topics which fit their own reality. In such a case the teacher only acts as a facilitator giving feedback and helping the learner to find suitable expressions. The following is a quote taken Clifton's paper *The humanistic lesson: student primacy in a world of meaningful interaction* (2004). Here again the word facilitator instead of teacher is used.

- "The learner, a French businesswoman who needs 'professional' English for her job, has been asked to 'build' her factory using cuisinaire rods and to describe the factory and work processes as she 'builds':
- 1) *Learner*: This is the office building. Here is the switchboard.
 - 2) *Facilitator*: Or reception?
 - 3) *Learner*: Reception and switchboard. Here is the scale er pont bascule.
 - 4) *F*: Er yeah yeah special word special word weighbridge.
 - 5) *Learner*: Oh voilà!
 - 6) *Facilitator*: It's the (slight pause) because we have the word in English a scales but that's for shopping and that kind of thing but when you put a lorry on this kind of thing to check the weight.... a weighbridge.
 - 7) *Learner*: Weighbridge er the truck with the waste paper comes on this bridge and the receptionists wait the truck
 - 8) *Facilitator*: She **weighs** it. The verb to weigh (writes word on blackboard).
 - 9) *Learner*: Okay and we have several office, the canteen with the manager, with my office with the sales assistant, meeting room and so on.
 - 10) *Facilitator*: All the administrative part of the company.
 - 11) *Learner*: And after that we have the production. The truck come here for the expedition of finished product.....*quai de chargement*
 - 12) *Facilitator*: Loading bay."

This was an example of a conversation in which the student had the absolute freedom to guide and to make it meaningful to him- or herself. It is an expression of the learner's thoughts rather than a reaction to the teacher's view of the world. The learner only gets input to concretise the last statement but which does not lead the conversation into another direction. This can be seen very clearly, for instance, in line 2 and 8, where the facilitator provides the words reception or weighs respectively. The first, reception, is an improvement of the learner's word choice, which transfers the meaning more clearly whereas the second is the correction of a word with a different meaning.

(Clifton 2004 <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/sept04/sart9.htm>)

This chapter is meant to give the reader an idea of what humanistic lessons could be like. Admittedly, taking a closer look at standard techniques of teaching reveals that many of them have humanistic elements in them anyway. Standard techniques are those known and conducted by nearly every educator over a long period of time. For example, writing down and learning vocabulary belonging to the same topic at the same time. In his article *Humanizing learning vocabulary through thematic clustering* (2012) Yaser Khajavi introduces this method as a new finding of HLT. In fact, this is a quite straight forward undertaking and often automatically done by teachers and learners. Secondly, trained educators might consider the use of literature in class. Skilful use may lead to personal development and the formation of values due to cognitive as well as emotional engagement with the text, its author and background information. This is yet another frequently practised teaching method by educators without noticing its humanistic potential and terming it HLT. The point which shall be made here is the following: Besides complementing one's teaching with new, highly creative tasks from a reference book, taking a closer look at well-tried ones might be sufficient to find humanistic elements. How many of such elements one finds is of course again dependent on how one defines HLT. The insight that HLT is nothing completely new and almost certainly something most educators do anyway shall take away the fear of trying it out. Afterwards, deeper engagement and those 'new, highly creative tasks from a reference book' should follow to be able to distinguish *real HLT tasks* and others. I have found plenty of activities termed *affective activities* or the like which are simply precursors of what we would now call a proper humanistic task. They are indeed set around one's own personality and help getting to know oneself as well as each other better but the crucial thing is, they just gather facts instead of revealing partly unconscious thoughts and emotions (Richard-Amato 1996: 242-252). For example, Richard-Amato presents an activity called *The Search*. Each participant gets a sheet of paper with the sentence *Find someone who...* and underneath several half sentences. The participants are now asked to walk around in class and find a person who fits one of the sentence halves. The task is completed when all the sentences have been allotted to a group member (Richard-Amato 1996: 243). There is of course nothing wrong with such activities and I do not want to dissuade from their use. Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that using such activities obviously cannot generate the same results as *real HLT tasks*. This could result in educators unrealised expectations due to constantly rejecting HLT.

So far we may understand what HLT is, how the theory can be turned into practice and what problems might occur in the course of this. The second part of my paper is dedicated to the question of is all this is still up to date and if the adherence to this approach is recommendable with regard to today's social requirements?

2 Situation analysis of Austria and Finland

2.1 Does HLT meet today's L2 requirements?

Considering all these scholars' suggestions for a more efficient language lesson published in the 20th century, the question arises if there is a place for humanistic language teaching in the 21st century as well. Nowadays there are diverse requirements of the students, the whole setting has slightly changed and besides all this there have been new findings in the research area of pedagogy. So is humanistic language teaching still suitable for our class rooms? I want to illustrate this issue taking a current issue of Austrian's secondary schools as an example. There is an ongoing debate among experts about the standardisation of graduation exams. The trend is obviously shifting towards a homogenous society in order to assure equality. Secondary schools with a special focus need to go back to general education in order to make sure their graduates reach the benchmark. This has been found to work against the issue of subjectivity in students' assessments but the declining individualisation is only one drawback of this approach.

It seems as if the Centralized A-Levels and the current debates going on in Austria are a well known problem for other countries as well. The problem stretches across several countries where high stalks⁶ tests require different abilities than those which are needed in real everyday life. The following quotations illustrate the discontent with test designs that is expressed by Finish English teachers.

"The matriculation exam definitely ties my hands too much – the test does not necessarily have any relevance for communicative language skills (understanding + making oneself understood)" (Ranta 2010: 173).

"The exam requires emphasizing grammar in teaching. Personally, I would like to encourage my students to acquire more wide-ranging language skills" (Ranta 2010: 173).

The context of the material these statements were taken from was a study investigating the use of a teaching approach other than humanistic language teaching but, nevertheless, the statements show that learning outcomes stated in current curricula hinder the realisation of alternative teaching approaches. These days most of our learning is institutionalised, it does not happen for learning's sake. Mostly there is an extrinsic motivation, a gate that opens as

⁶ High stalks tests in contrast to low stalks test are the important ones in a learner's career opening new possibilities. For example, a grammar check up during the term would be a low stalks test whereas the school leaving exam (A-Levels) which permits academic studies, is a high stalks one.

soon as we have achieved the learning outcome required. Therefore teaching and learning cannot be completely free but needs to conform to certain institutions' standards. So a change in the approach to learning must start with a change in the institutions' guidelines.

As an example of how much curriculum, assessment and teaching influence each other, on page 36-38 there is a copy of an exam used in the Lower Austrian upper secondary school HLW Biedermannsdorf, the school I am teaching at currently. The exam regards the prescribed abilities stated in the curriculum. The teaching had to be focused in a way to prepare learners best for these requirements although the majority of the pupils will never make use of such abilities but would be helped more by individualised ones. The abilities tested in the tasks will be of least importance for Austrian learners of English. With regards to our sample exam there are four tasks conforming to that of the Centralized A-Levels requiring one task for each skill. Due to the fact that speaking cannot be tested in a school testing format, the speaking part has been replaced by a grammar exercise. Now let us consider one after the other in more detail and start with the listening comprehension. Students were asked to fill in 16 gaps in a gap text after hearing a conversation twice. The transcript of the recording has been provided for this paper only, not for the students in the test situation, this means, the students could only listen to the text, not read it. The transcript shows that the recording is not identical with the lines of the gap text. The information is provided in the correct order but only certain information has to be taken out. This is the first point of this listening comprehension which conforms to real life situations. In most cases of real communication the listener needs to get the gist of the message in order to be able to keep up communication or respond accurately. Of course, there are situations where understanding a specific shop name, for example, is required but if this was the case the dialogue would have developed differently. If our sample conversation had taken place in real life it would not have been important to understand certain words required here in the gap text. For instance, in the second but last sentence the words *a couple of* are unessential for understanding the meaning. Having *ordered there weeks ago* only, without the *a couple of* before *weeks* would be equally comprehensible. From an assessor's perspective testing listening comprehension it might seem obvious why such fairly unimportant words, short words like *new* and brand names are to be filled in, because they give the most information about a learner's language ability as it is believed that such words require more language use and experience than understanding core vocabulary. Nevertheless, acquiring and testing such abilities can only be done for the sake of skill assessment as such, but definitely not for

enabling someone to communicate effectively in real life situations. Furthermore the fact that the recording is played twice and the gap text given before the CD is played learners are able to guess what kind of information to pay attention to thus creating unrealistic circumstances for the learners. In real life learners will hardly ever hear the same dialogue twice, nor will they know beforehand what might come up in the conversation and what to pay attention to. Moreover, the third point of critique is the people's accent on the recording. They are talking British English. Getting exposed to British English is and should of course be a major part of learning English but especially in testing situations and in the test training phase teachers should rather stick to non-native speaker English. Those Austrian teenagers having taken this exam will, to a very high extent, be confronted with non-native speaker English rather than with native-speaker English in their future lives. They will use English as a means of communication with people speaking a different mother tongue. They will use English as a lingua franca, so to say, and probably, in the minority of cases, talk to an English native speaker.

The second task is completing a grammar grid. One word, either the infinitive, the past tense form, the past participle form or the German translation, of an irregular English verb is given, the other three are to be filled in. This task is simply showing declarative knowledge but does not say anything about procedural knowledge, so how are the grammar rules used in communication? Moreover, the task description does not supply any context. Grammar tasks should never be presented in isolation but rather embedded in possibly explicit contexts. This offers the learner examples where these grammar rules could be used in real life situations.

Thirdly, there is a writing task requiring the students to write a dialogue between a shop assistant and a customer. A word limit is set and additionally there are eight words and phrases to be used. It has to be said that this is a highly artificial task and the preparation for it in class does not conform to how to teach a language as a means of communication. There are four points of critique with this task. First of all, a dialogue is not a suitable text for practicing writing but a typical text type for speaking because in order to fulfil the task requirements the student needs to invent the interlocutor's answers. This is not how it goes in real life so why practice it? Just to enable learners to pass this test and make them acquire an ability they will need no more. Even more artificial are the given words, which need to be used. Inventing a dialogue is unrealistic enough but the order to include certain words is even more so. On the contrary, in real life situations one needs to be fluent and spontaneous in his/her word choice. The ability of building up a conversation in order to make certain words

fit will never be of importance in real life communication and therefore should not be a part of assessment as the test results will not give any information about the test taker's ability to use the language and the time spent on preparing the test taker for this task seems lost because it has been spent on something insignificant. The limited learning time should be spent on acquiring skills pupils will probably need in their future life. Besides the given words, the word limit is yet another factor which reduces the quality of this writing task. Although I can, from a teacher's point of view, understand the reason behind the task set up, it does not meet HLT concept's guidelines. I suggest that the word limit has to be set in order to ensure that all test takers write a text of similar length, which is easier to compare and assess as well as reduces the chance of students spending too much time on one task and neglecting others. Furthermore, I can imagine that the given words are meant to prevent pupils from content-wise drifting away too far and to ensure the inclusion of learnt and important words, again in order to make assessment easier and to help test takers who are lost. Nevertheless, how many reasons of approval there might be, a very important aspect of an activity which should always be considered, namely being on the basis of real life situations is not given. This aspect is an important one because as it is commonly known situations we have already experienced are always easier to handle than unknown ones. Due to the fact that language teaching time is very limited teachers should rather go for practising those situations their pupils will most probably face in their present or future lives. According to the concept of seeing English as a lingua franca one should concentrate on their present lives because the future cannot yet be predicted. The concept of Lingua Franca English will be highlighted in this thesis at a later stage.

The last task for the Austrian test takers is a reading exercise. First there is a text about the internet and underneath there are 10 statements which have to be marked if they are either true or false according to the text above. Again this task does not reveal much information about learners' language ability, not even about their reading skills. Moreover some statements are obviously true or false without even reading the text. For example, statement 3 *Computer users do not find the internet interesting* is obviously false. Our experience tells us what a text about the internet might be like, how it may develop and what contents it could include. So this reading comprehension task rather tests guessing skills and logical thinking than any reading skills. If students do not know the correct answer by experience or even if they do not at all understand the text or the statements they still have a 50% chance to score correctly.

Apart from all these weaknesses of each task, there is a general point of critique. This low stalks test is set up in a way the Centralized A-Levels will be, namely each skill is tested in a separate task. Although there are no guidelines how to set up low stalks tests, it has been done in a manner to get pupils used to this testing format. But why is there a regulation for separating skills in the Centralized A-Levels at all? Again for reasons of comparability, equality and objectivity in assessing, as already discussed above. Task descriptions like *read the story and write a suitable ending* will become rare because they do not follow Centralized A-Levels' principles. To be more concrete, such an exercise does not measure language abilities separately. With such exercises it could be the case that a weak reader cannot show his/her excellent writing skills because of comprehension problems while reading. The new regulations reduce cases like this but nevertheless, separating skills is unrealistic as there will hardly be any real life situations where only one of the four skills is needed. So the results gained in such tests, also in our example test, do not provide any information on how the test takers survive in real life communication and that is what a school leaving exam, being the border of education and its appliance, should show.

This first part of chapter 1.2 shall illustrate how regulations and prescribed learning outcomes determined by authorities of education policy effect teaching materials, methods and assessment. Requirements of tertiary education have an impact on upper secondary education, which again influences lower secondary education and so on. The whole educational system somehow belongs together and has to work together in order to bring satisfactory results. Therefore it is important to check whether HLT fits into a system that has experienced various changes since the 1970's.

TASK 1: LISTENING

Transcript of listening

Look, we always seem to forget something or other, so let's make a shopping list, OK?

Sure. Fire away.

Well, I want to go to Debenham's to buy a pullover to go with my new trousers, and you need at least two new shirts as well, Jake.

OK. I've got that. What else?

Well, while we're at Debenham's we can look at the jeans. Joshua and Jane both need a new pair and they're in the sale, I think.

Good. Anything else? At Debenham's, I mean?

No, not really, but while we're at it we could go to into the babies department. We must get something for the Brown's new baby – a rubber duck, perhaps.

Fine. Then what?

Well, I really must go to W.H. Smith's to get the book Jane wants. She'll never forgive me if I forget that again. And then we should go to Virgin to pick up that DVD we ordered a couple of weeks ago. I'm sure it's there by now.

Oh, yes. We mustn't forget that or they might sell it to somebody else. Anyhow, this is what the list...

Hey, hang on a minute. I haven't finished yet. On the way home, we must call in at Safeway's to get some milk and eggs. I'm afraid I forgot them this morning.

Yes, OK, I'll put them on the list.

Listen to the dialogue and complete the sentences with the missing details. (8 credits)

Anna suggests making a _____ so that they don't forget anything. Anna wants to go to Debenhams to get a _____ to match her _____ trousers. While Anna and Jake are at _____, they also want to look at _____ for Jane and Joshua. They're in the _____. Anna wants to go to the babies _____ to buy a rubber _____ for the Brown's new _____. Anna says she mustn't forget to go to W.H. Smith's to buy a _____ for _____. After calling at W.H. Smith's, Anna tells that they should go to _____ to collect a _____ they ordered there _____ weeks ago. _____ to buy some milk and _____.

TASK 4: READING (8 credits)

Read the following article and tick whether the statements below are true or false.

What is the Internet?

The Internet is a network of computers which link up around the world. There is great interest in the Internet and by 2005 there will be 14 million UK users. World-wide, there will be 377 million users by the end of 2005.

There are many services on the Internet. They include e-mail and the World Wide Web. The WWW is the part of the Internet which is of most interest to commercial organizations such as ShoppersUniverse.

What is ShoppersUniverse?

ShoppersUniverse is a shopping centre on the Internet: customers can browse for information about products and pay for them by using their computer. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and throughout the world.

What does ShoppersUniverse offer?

ShoppersUniverse is **not** an electronic copy of a print catalogue. ShoppersUniverse is an Internet shopping centre with shop windows offering a wide variety of products.

The Internet shopping centre is much better than a paper catalogue. If you are looking for certain things, you can use a search facility which will find all items and list them on your computer screen.

Computer Shopping

The Internet works by sending information from computer to computer until the information reaches its destination. So when data is sent from point A to point B, every computer in between could look into what is being sent. Ordering on-line

Is probably safer than using the telephone or postal system because of a special code used for each payment.

	true	false
1. Internet services include e-mail and the World Wide Web.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The WWW is not interesting for commercial organizations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Computer users do not find the Internet interesting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. ShoppersUniverse is a real shopping centre in London.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. ShoppersUniverse is open 24 hours a day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The service is only available in the United Kingdom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. ShoppersUniverse offers more than a print catalogue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. The products on offer are constantly changing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. On-line ordering means the same as computer shopping.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Orders through the Net are safer than using the telephone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(Davis et al. 2006: 55)

TASK 2: IRREGULAR VERBS (8 credits)			
German translation	Infinitive	Past tense (2 nd form)	Past participle (3 rd form)
kaufen			
	write		
denken			
		sold	
sprechen			
		fought	
bezahlen			
	find		

TASK 3: WRITING (16 credits)

Use the following words and expressions:

here you are	cash desk
expensive	bargain counter
mirror	fitting room
try on	rack

Write at least 100 words.

Jennifer Jenkins comments on the matter like this:

“recent changes in both users and uses of English have become so far-reaching that a major rethink of English language teaching (ELT) goals is called for... however... this will first require a substantial overhaul of English language testing, given that teachers and learners alike will be reluctant to embrace any curriculum change that is not reflected in the target set by the major examination boards” (2006: 42).

Jenkins further observes:

“It is changes in teaching which keep pace with changes in testing and not vice versa. This is why it is so very crucial for the examination boards to engage with EIL [English as an international language].” (2006: 49).

Jenkins sees the issues from a different angle. In her opinion, testing affects teaching. This is different from what has been written above, namely that learning outcomes guide teaching and testing. However, each testing needs a predefined content. So this again leads to the

conclusion I have drawn above, the statement that all the components influence each other in a way.

So far several changes and their impact on the education system have been examined. One author, claiming that HLT can no longer account for all these changes is Richard Flynn. He is obviously repressing the topicality of humanistic language teaching and needs to be stated at this point. In his article *Has Humanistic ESL had its day?* he mentions the increasing pressure to perform well today's students and teachers are exposed to. Nowadays a profound education is essential in order to find a good job and earn enough money for living. This pressure lets teachers forget about their students inner selves and makes solid performances the focus of education. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the Centralized A-Levels, as mentioned above, definitely strengthen this trend. Furthermore, he sees no evidence for the success of affective learning. The latter points back to what has already been mentioned in *1.2 Arguments against HLT*, where the lack of empirical data has been discussed.

(Flynn <http://www.usingenglish.com/speaking-out/humanistic-teaching.html>)

Another scholar does not see any insuperable differences between now and the time when HLT was introduced. Paul Bress (2007) compared the 6 most prominent changes of the 21st century with the assumptions of humanistic language teaching. His research was meant to show the compatibility between a rather old concept and the modern world. Rapid change, political correctness, much choice, less tolerance towards war, shorter attention spans and high expectations of goods and services were named to be those changes. It was found that some of those can simply be accounted for whereas there are others which do not seem to be that compatible. Those belonging to the unproblematic ones are the preference of problem solving to war and political awareness because these require empathy, which is definitely a theme of humanism; additionally, much choice, which can easily be provided by the teacher. That makes 3 parallels out of 6 changes whereas Bress imagines the development of a higher attention span and reflection skills to be likely when one is regularly exposed to situations where those are needed. (Bress 2007 www.hltmag.co.uk/nov07/sart11.rtf)

To sum up, it seems as if the question about HLT's appropriateness is still undecided. There are optimists as well as pessimists, both backing up their arguments with comprehensible evidence. However, the matter probably needs to be approached differently. Another way of tackling the issue would be by taking a closer look at the current situation instead of asking oneself if HLT *could* be good for learners and if it *would* lead to success. Do

HLT principles play a major role in today's second language teaching, is what needs to be asked. The following chapter will provide some answers.

2.2 Austrian curriculum

One way of finding out about the relevance of humanistic elements in today's Austrian education system is an examination of the curriculum. (BMUKK 2013

http://www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at/upload/1206_HLW_KultKongrMan2006.pdf)

I chose to have a closer look at the general educational aims 'allgemeine Bildungsziele' and the subject matter 'Lehrstoff' of English as a second language set up for a vocational school with culture and congress management 'Kultur- und Kongressmanagement' as its key area of training. The choice was influenced by the fact that I myself have attended such a school type and I am currently teaching in one like this. This made me believe that I have a better understanding of how the formulation of the aims is meant.

To start with, fragments of the text referred to as the description of general educational aims are depicted and commented on.

„Die wesentlichen Ziele der Ausbildung sind Persönlichkeitsbildung, Fähigkeit der beruflichen Mobilität und Flexibilität, Kreativität, Kritikfähigkeit, soziales Engagement, Kommunikationsfähigkeit in der Unterrichtssprache und in den Fremdsprachen sowie die Bereitschaft zur ständigen Weiterbildung“ (BMUKK 2013: 3).

First of all it is noteworthy that the term personality development 'Persönlichkeitsbildung', which is a key term in HLT, is the first one stated in the sentence. One might suggest that the order of mentioning might correlate with the degree of importance. Additionally, the following aims, creativity, the ability to give and receive criticism, and social commitment, are also traits belonging to the concept of humanism.

Further down in the text the sentence

“Die Schülerinnen und Schüler sollen befähigt werden, verantwortungsbewusst und ganzheitlich zu denken und handeln“ (BMUKK 2013: 3)

can be found. Here the term holistic 'ganzheitlich' is what is prominent about it. Nevertheless, it is not quite clear how this is to be understood. It seems as if the statement should be read like this: pupils shall account for every aspect of a matter in their thinking and acting. So the holistic rather belongs to the completeness of a topic than to the whole-person-concept and

is therefore not explicit evidence for humanistic elements in today's upper secondary education.

Moving away from the general education aim towards objectives in language learning the same pattern becomes visible: at first place goals concerning one's personality are stated, whereas the ones expressing language abilities are in later positions only:

“das Erlernen von Fremdsprachen als persönliche Bereicherung und Möglichkeit zum Verständnis anderer Denksysteme erfahren, Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede in Kulturen feststellen und eine weltoffene und tolerante Lebenseinstellung entwickeln“. (BMUKK 2013: 9)

In this passage again the word personal is the first, followed by understanding of other systems of thought, noticing equalities and differences in various cultures and evolving an open-minded and tolerant attitude towards life. In short, at least one out of nine language aims contains humanistic elements.

Next is the investigation of learning outcomes explicitly for the subject English as a foreign language, in contrast to targets of language learning in general. Here topics to deal with in class are listed.

“I . Jahrgang:

Entwicklung der sprachlichen Kompetenz anhand folgender Themenfelder:

Persönliches Umfeld: Familie, Freundeskreis und soziale Beziehungen, Wohnbereich, Kleidung und Mode, Freizeit, Sport, Medien, Bildung. Formen der persönlichen Kommunikation. (9)

II. Jahrgang:

Entwicklung der sprachlichen Kompetenz anhand folgender Themenfelder:

Persönliches Umfeld: Medien, Bildung, Gesundheit, Ernährung, Formen der persönlichen Kommunikation“. (BMUKK 2013: 10)

A consideration reveals that topics concerning one's personal environment should be discussed in the first and second form of the vocational upper secondary school. The list includes issues like family, friends, relationships, living, clothes, nutrition, leisure time, education and types of personal communication. The contents of the curricula for the third, fourth and fifth form does not include the term personal environment 'persönliches Umfeld'. This suggests that talking about oneself, related parties and familiar situations correlates with little language ability whereas having higher language skills requires talking about unfamiliar events having nothing to do with one's own culture and life.

(BMUKK 2013

http://www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at/upload/1206_HLW_KultKongrMan2006.pdf)

So far it has been shown that there are indeed expressions like *personal development* or *personal environment* in the Austrian vocational upper secondary curriculum. Nevertheless, this does not go with the understanding of the term humanistic language teaching as it was described above. It does not say anything about involving the students' feelings or teaching affectively. All in all, it can be said that this curriculum does not feature HLT elements, which, in turn, reveals how important it must be for today's L2 education – namely hardly important.

2.3 English course book used in Austria

Setting up a curriculum is one thing but how is it implemented in real life? Again the issue of transforming theory into practise needs to be overcome. The curriculum is the theory of how it should ideally be but teachers interpret it in a slightly different way or set their focus differently. So it would need individual investigation to find out to what extent today's education is influenced by humanistic elements. To regulate this variation of teaching more and more laws in the field of education are set up to work against individualisation and subjectivity. One of the latest regulations concerns the Centralized A-Levels. Another guidance, whose use is not strictly checked but still reflects the curriculum and hence a country's definition of education, is the course book. It needs to meet certain criteria in order to get published. However, this brings me to the conclusion that another way of gathering information on how education is understood is by considering the course book, its content and even more important its set-up. To enable a comparison with the findings of the curriculum's analysis I stick to Austrian vocational upper secondary schools. From the pool of books which are used in such schools, *Focus on Modern Business 1* has been chosen. My choice is again founded on the fact that it is the one I have been working with most. I am not convinced that the book having the highest sales volume is the best. Simply for the reason that there is no BEST book. Its quality always depends on the purpose it has to fulfil and that is why I did not see the point in doing research on sales figures and chose the best-seller. Of course, choosing one that is not used would not bring satisfactory findings either. Therefore making a random decision or accounting for selection criteria like familiarity, which would need to be disregarded in other contexts, seems to be the best solution. Now let us move on to the investigation of the course book. First of all, concerning the chosen topics, it can be said that they correlate with the curriculum. It starts with a unit about introducing oneself

and getting to know class mates, continues with a topic on homes, which is closely linked to one's personality and then discusses subjects which incorporate more and more of the outer world. Those are units on shopping, home entertainment, travelling or exchange visits. However, this correlation with the curriculum was predictable otherwise the book would not have been published. Furthermore, the choice of topics does not say anything about the book's appropriateness for humanistic language teaching. It is the set-up, the way the issues are approached, which needs to go under further investigation. Concerning this, what the authors had indeed been trying to do is the inclusion of the pupils' personal opinion. Several exercises are linked to the students' own experience or literally request learners to talk about themselves and express their own views. The following examples are taken from the unit 0 entitled *Getting started*

"Do you already know all your classmates and your English teacher? No? Then take this list of questions and interview four of your classmates and your English teacher. Take notes so that you can sum up all the information you have collected. Now try to write a personal portrait of yourself as shown in the example. Include the following information: ..." (Zekl et al 2010: 7)

Unit 1 entitled *Welcome Home* includes task descriptions like this:

"Where do you live? Try to give a short description of the place where you live in answering the following questions in a short text: ..." (Zekl et al 2010: 12)

Next are some examples taken from units further back in the book, which are, as mentioned above, not directly concerned with the learners themselves. Additionally, at the end of the term when one is normally working through chapters further back in the book rather than the other way round, pupils are supposed to have improved their language abilities, which could also affect the approach towards certain issues or the formulation of tasks. Here they are taken from unit 9 entitled *Getting about*:

"What means of transport do you usually or regularly use? What means would you use if you had a free choice? In these days of traffic jams, air pollution and high costs, which of the means of transport shown in the photos do you think are most practical? Say why" (Zekl et al 2010: 103)

To sum up it can be said that the book indeed follows the requirements of the curriculum and sets the learners' personal opinions and experiences in the centre of learning but does not dig any deeper into the learners' inner selves. It does not include any humanistic elements. This finding strengthens the claim about their unimportance set up in the previous chapter already. It seems as if this teaching approach and its implementation have disappeared in

today's upper secondary EFL education. What needs to be kept in mind, of course, is the fact that my investigation has comprised one book only and thus is not highly significant.

So far we have seen that humanistic language teaching has a few drawbacks (see chapter 1.2) but a variety of positive effects on the learners (see chapter 1.1). A further advantage is the fact that it can easily be implemented in various areas of teaching. The ones mentioned above (page 24ff) are translation and Teaching by Joint Presentation but these are just a selection and were meant to serve as examples of the approach's practicality. Authors like Gertrude Moskowitz and Earl W. Stevick felt the need to distribute the findings of that once new approach and published books or papers to influence that time's practicing teachers. It even seems that small changes in educators' teaching style were not enough. They aimed at a reformation of the whole education system in order to dissociate oneself from a plain cognitive teaching approach. However, there were obviously many teachers who got convinced by HLT principles, adapted their teaching style according to this and published their experiences for other teachers to do alike. Two of them, Cristina Ferreira and Maria González Davies, are already mentioned above. Despite all this, the HLT era did not last for long. First of all because the education system is always progressing and notions get constantly adapted and replaced by recent findings. Other possible reasons could have been the approach's drawbacks discussed in this paper. Although there are not many, they appear to be drastic. It seems as if the approach did not develop in accordance with the late 20th and 21st century. However, there could have been numerous more reasons, which can never be reconstructed anymore because each teacher might have had his/her own reasons for rejecting HLT or they just practised it loosely, not 100% conform to HLT principles, until they moved away completely. Anyhow, much more important than the reasons why it disappeared is the loss' impact on the education system and this is what is next discussed in this paper. It seems reasonable to argue that the discontinuation of HLT does not matter and should no longer be bewailed as long as the education system as it is now is a successful one. Discontinuation seems to be the case, shown by the examination of today's Austrian upper secondary school curriculum and a frequently used course book in chapter 2.2 and 2.3. Unfortunately the Austrian education system is not a very successful one. What evidence makes me put forward such a claim? The answer is PISA's results. This leads to a further question, namely, what is PISA? At this stage it needs to be made clear what exactly PISA is

and why I am relying on its results in order to discuss Austria's more or less successful education system any further. That is why the next chapter of this paper is dedicated to PISA.

2.4 PISA

PISA is the short form of OECD International Programme for Student Assessment and was founded in 1997. Since the year 2000, every three years, 15-year-old students of more than 70 participating countries and economies are tested on different skills. The programme's purpose is the evaluation of education systems worldwide in order to be able to establish suggestions for improvement. To avoid an unrealistic picture of the issue, the participating countries must not send students; they are rather randomly chosen by the organisation. Then those pupils need to take tests and are assessed on three different subjects, namely reading, mathematics and science. In the year 2000, when the first PISA study took place, there was a focus on reading. This focus shifted in 2003, when there was the second PISA study, to mathematics. 2006's focus lay with science, and for 2009 it started again with reading and so on. Additionally, to help the results' interpretation, the participants as well as their school principals, and in some countries even their parents, were asked to fill in a questionnaire aimed at finding out about the students' family background and the organisation of the school they are attending. The unique aspect of PISA and also the reason why its results are considered as reliable evidence for this paper is the fact that the tests are not designed according any curriculum. They are rather aimed at assessing the students' ability to cope with every-day situations. The purpose is to find out to what extent pupils at the end of compulsory education are able to apply their so far acquired skills in order to act as an adequate, responsible member of society. Moreover, it is the most extensive, best known and influential study on education systems having Austria as a participant.

(PISA 2013 <http://www.oecd.org/pisa>)

To get a clearer picture of how the organisation gains its results, a closer consideration of the test questions seems reasonable. The following is an example task of PISA 2009 assessing the students' reading comprehension. It has been incorporated into this paper to help the readers get an idea how PISA is working. First of all, the reading comprehension is divided into print reading tasks and electronic reading tasks. The print reading tasks consist of ten units, each focusing on a different aspect of reading ability. The electronic reading tasks consist of another two units, which have to be solved on a computer and are optional. The

following is a copy of the print reading task's unit 1 exercise. For this task the students were asked to read the text about Macondo and answer the corresponding questions underneath:

"Macondo

Dazzled by so many and such marvellous inventions, the people of Macondo did not know where their amazement began. They stayed up all night looking at the pale electric bulbs fed by the plant that Aureliano Triste had brought back when the train made its second trip, and it took time and effort for them to grow accustomed to its obsessive toom-toom. They became indignant over the living images that the prosperous merchant Don Bruno Crespi projected in the theatre with the lion-head ticket windows, for a character who had died and was buried in one film, and for whose misfortune tears of affliction had been shed, would reappear alive and transformed into an Arab in the next one. The audience, who paid two centavos apiece to share the difficulties of the actors, would not tolerate that outlandish fraud and they broke up the seats. The mayor, at the urging of Don Bruno Crespi, explained by means of a proclamation that the cinema was a machine of illusions that did not merit the emotional outburst of the audience. With that discouraging explanation many felt that they had been the victims of some new and showy gypsy business and they decided not to return to the movies, considering that they already had too many troubles of their own to weep over the acted-out misfortunes of imaginary beings.

- What feature of the movies caused the people of Mocondo to become angry?
 - At the end of the passage, why did the people of Mocondo decide not to return to the movies?
- A. They wanted amusement and distraction, but found that the movies were realistic and depressing.
- B. They could not afford the ticket prices.
- C. They wanted to save their emotions for real-life occasions.
- D. They were seeking emotional involvement, but found the movies boring, unconvincing and of poor quality.
-
- Who are the "imaginary beings" referred to in the last line of the passage?
- A. Ghosts.
- B. Fairground inventions.
- C. Characters in the movies.
- D. Actors.
-
- Do you agree with the final judgement of the people of Macondo about the value of the movies? Explain your answer by comparing your attitude to the movies with theirs."

(PISA 2013

<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisa2009/PISA%202009%20reading%20test%20items.pdf>)

Two of those four questions are so called multiple-choice questions, where only one answer, either A, B, C or D, is correct. The remaining answers are distracters. The other two questions require a written answer. Due to the diversity of the tasks and units it is recommendable to consider all the sample tasks provided on the following homepage:

<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisa2009/PISA%202009%20reading%20test%20items.pdf> to gain a full understanding of what is being assessed in PISA. For more detailed information on the tasks like their framework characteristics and coding guides also refer to that site.

One crucial thing to repeat at this point is the fact that PISA is NOT assessing foreign language abilities. Although this paper is dedicated to humanistic language learning one has to keep in mind that PISA does not offer insights in how effective a nation's foreign language learning policy is. Nevertheless, the study fits the content and serves as a good example because humanistic language teaching claims to educate the whole person. It claims to go far beyond knowledge transfer. Such a whole-person-education should make it possible for its receivers to handle tasks which are not based on any school curriculum but taken from real-life situations. One feature of the tasks, which already shows that they do not conform to Austrian's Centralized A-Levels standards is the fact that the sample reading comprehension provided above is combined with a writing task. The first of the four questions just requires one sentence formulated by the candidates, whereas the forth question requires the expression of a personal opinion and a comparison of one's own view with that described in the text. The scores a participant gains for this forth question does not provide information of how well he/she has understood the text because it might be the case that one has completely understood the text but is not able to express his/her thoughts on paper. Such test formats are no longer allowed in tests according to the Centralized A-Levels. The skills have to be tested separately in order to get the least falsified results. Although this kind of testing makes sense in terms of equality of opportunities and objectivity, it is not realistic. In real life one will never only have to read, write or listen. Those skills will always be combined. Although PISA does not take the latest regulations for testing into account, it is an influential study in the field of education.

As the year 2012 is not yet over by the time this paper is written, it can only contain PISA's results of 2009. The following chart shows the results of all participating countries and economies in the category of reading. Due to the situation there was a focus on reading in

2009, the reading tasks have been divided into access and retrieve, integrate and interpret, reflect and evaluate, continuous texts and non-continuous texts.

(PISA 2013 <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/46643496.pdf>)

Chart 1: PISA 2009, results *reading*

	On the overall reading scale	On the reading subscales				
		Access and retrieve	Integrate and interpret	Reflect and evaluate	Continuous texts	Non-continuous texts
Shanghai-China	556	549	558	557	564	539
Korea	539	542	541	542	538	542
Finland	536	532	538	536	535	535
Hong Kong-China	533	530	530	540	538	522
Singapore	526	526	525	529	522	539
Canada	524	517	522	535	524	527
New Zealand	521	521	517	531	518	532
Japan	520	530	520	521	520	518
Australia	515	513	513	523	513	524
Netherlands	508	519	504	510	506	514
Belgium	506	513	504	505	504	511
Norway	503	512	502	505	505	498
Estonia	501	503	500	503	497	512
Switzerland	501	505	502	497	498	505
Poland	500	500	503	498	502	496
Iceland	500	507	503	496	501	499
United States	500	492	495	512	500	503
Liechtenstein	499	508	498	498	495	506
Sweden	497	505	494	502	499	498
Germany	497	501	501	491	496	497
Ireland	496	498	494	502	497	496
France	496	492	497	495	492	498
Chinese Taipei	495	496	499	493	496	500
Denmark	495	502	492	493	496	493
United Kingdom	494	491	491	503	492	506
Hungary	494	501	496	489	497	487
Portugal	489	488	487	496	492	488
Macao-China	487	493	488	481	488	481
Italy	486	482	490	482	489	476
Latvia	484	476	484	492	484	487
Slovenia	483	489	489	470	484	476
Greece	483	468	484	489	487	472
Spain	481	480	481	483	484	473
Czech Republic	478	479	488	462	479	474

Slovak Republic	477	491	481	466	479	471
Croatia	476	492	472	471	478	472
Israel	474	463	473	483	477	467
Luxembourg	472	471	475	471	471	472
Austria	470	477	471	463	470	472
Lithuania	468	476	469	463	470	462
Turkey	464	467	459	473	466	461
Dubai (UAE)	459	458	457	466	461	460
Russian Federation	459	469	467	441	461	452
Chile	449	444	452	452	453	444
Serbia	442	449	445	430	444	438
Bulgaria	429	430	436	417	433	421
Uruguay	426	424	423	436	429	421
Mexico	425	433	418	432	426	424
Romania	424	423	425	426	423	424
Thailand	421	431	416	420	423	423
Trinidad and Tobago	416	413	419	413	418	417
Colombia	413	404	411	422	415	409
Brazil	412	407	406	424	414	408
Montenegro	408	408	420	383	411	398
Jordan	405	394	410	407	417	387
Tunisia	404	393	393	427	408	393
Indonesia	402	399	397	409	405	399
Argentina	398	394	398	402	400	391
Kazakhstan	390	397	397	373	399	371
Albania	385	380	393	376	392	366
Qatar	372	354	379	376	375	361
Panama	371	363	372	377	373	359
Peru	370	364	371	368	374	356
Azerbaijan	362	361	373	335	362	351
Kyrgyzstan	314	299	327	300	319	293

	Statistically significantly above the OECD average
	Not statistically significantly different from the OECD average
	Statistically significantly below the OECD average

Referring to and to underline a fact, Austria's results being between 463 and 477 are below OECD average. The best results according to this chart were achieved by Shanghai-China. Nevertheless, Finland is often referred to as the winner because taking all 4 studies and each category into account shows that Finland's students did best. With the places 4 in mathematics, 1 in reading and 3 in sciences the first PISA study in the year 2000 was the

worst for Finland. In 2003 they achieved the most points in all categories. Three years later they lost one place in reading comprehension but could still claim first place in mathematics and sciences. The latest study showed that they dropped one place in mathematics but could stay first place in sciences. The results shall be made explicit in chart 2.

(PISA 2013 <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/46643496.pdf>)

Chart 2: PISA, Finland's results 2000-2009

Mathematics				Reading comprehension				Sciences			
2000	2003	2006	2009	2000	2003	2006	2009	2000	2003	2006	2009
536	544	548	541	546	543	547	536	538	548	563	554
(4)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(1)	(1)

(Wikipedia 2013 <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/PISA-Studien>)

All in all, with six first place and three second place positionings out of twelve Finland is the participant which achieved the best results on average. Due to this fact, I assume Finland to be a nation with a very successful education policy.

2.5 Finland's education system

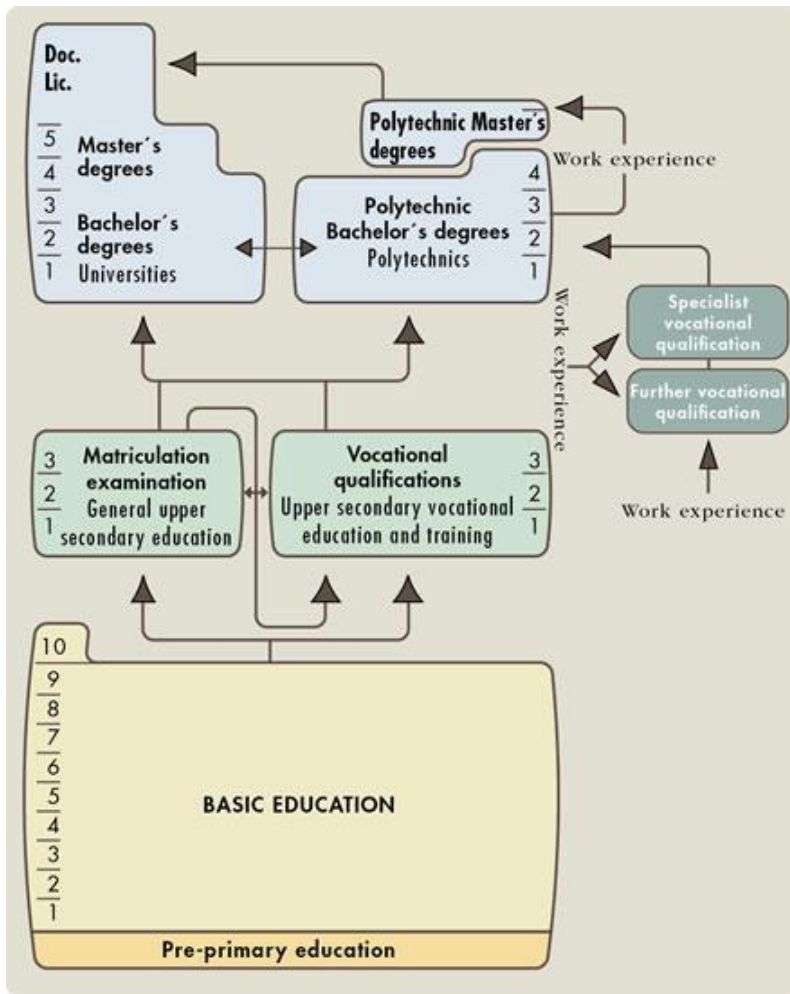
The following chapter is meant to investigate possible reasons for this success. Let us have a closer look at Finland's education system. The Finnish National Board of Education's homepage will be of great help for this. In Finland education is seen as one of the fundamental rights of all citizens as stated on the homepage mentioned above:

"All citizens regardless of age, sex, culture and social status should have equal opportunities to receive education. Additionally, the native-speakers of Swedish must have the right to get education in their mother tongue".

(Finnish National Board of Education 2013 <http://www.oph.fi/english/education>)

One of Finland's major goals is to offer a high level of education to as many people as possible. Therefore, the basic education takes 10 years. Different to that of Austria, pupils are not separated after 4 years of primary school but are taught collectively for 10 years. After that, they need to decide between general upper secondary education and upper secondary vocational education, which takes another three years. Chart 3 provides a corresponding overview.

Chart 3: Overview Finnish education system



(Finnish National Board of Education 2013

[http://www.oph.fi/english/education/overview of the education system\)](http://www.oph.fi/english/education/overview%20of%20the%20education%20system)

These general conditions, the basic set-up of the education system, is not the only difference between Finland and Austria. There are several underlying notions dominating Finland's second language teaching and assessment, where further differences can be noticed. The Business Insider International published *26 Amazing Facts About Finland's Unorthodox Education System*. The selection of the 13 most prominent ones might be the answer to this chapter's question about the secret of Finland's success in education. Those statements are listed underneath and commented on.

"All children, clever or not, are taught in the same classrooms".

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

One possible reason for the nation's success could be collective education in the first years. The early separation of strong and weak students as practised in Austria, where the strong ones attend a so called Gymnasium and the weaker ones a Hauptschule could have a negative influence on pupils' development. Some students might achieve very good marks after some time of education but do not have a chance to change to a more demanding educational system. Therefore they will not feel challenged enough, which will have a negative impact on their intrinsic motivation. Others might feel that it is all just too much for them. In such cases a change of school is also not as easy as if just the learning content had to be adapted. Aside from a change of school, even the change from a so called Leistungsgruppe 'performance group' to another is not always as easy as it should be in Austria. Once you are mainstreamed after an aptitude test there needs to be convincing reasons to change or reverse it.

"Finnish children don't start school until they are 7".

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

In Austria children normally start at the age of 6. Only in cases where tests show that the child is not yet sufficiently developed it is allowed to do another year of pre-primary education.

"Compared with other systems, they rarely take exams or do homework until they are well into their teens".

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

"The children are not measured at all for the first six years of their education".

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

In Austria homework is seen as an important component of teaching as it ensures further engagement with the teaching subject outside the regular lesson. This extra work is needed for attaining the learning level and therefore forms the basis of education from an early age on. Also pupils are tested in their first years of institutional education.

"Science classes are capped at 16 students so that they may perform practical experiments every class".

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

Austrian's classes normally get split if they consist of more than 25 pupils. This regulation, however, is valid for the main subjects, Mathematics, German and other languages only. In all the other subjects, including science classes, there are normally far more than 16 students.

“Teachers only spend 4 hours a day in the classroom, and take 2 hours a week for ‘professional development’”.

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

Austrian teachers, working full time, spend definitely more hours a day in the classroom.

Additionally, they have to do documentary work which sometimes seems to be more important than the work with learners. Further education or personal development as it is called here is also an issue in Austria. Recently there have been debates on how many lessons a teacher should spend on doing further education and if those should be compulsory.

Nevertheless, 2 hours per week is not debateable in Austria, amongst other things because of the lack of teachers as discussed in the following paragraph.

“Finland has the same amount of teachers as New York City, but far fewer students”.

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

Unfortunately, in Austria there is currently a lack of teachers, which will not be remedied in the near future. Students, during their teaching education, have to make up for the unavailable teachers. Studying and teaching on the side or the other way round will definitely have a negative influence on study. Many students will take longer to finish, graduate with worse marks or in the worst case will never graduate. An obvious consequence of this lack of teachers will be the decrease of quality in taught education. I can imagine that the amount of seminars one has to attend to become a teacher will be reduced in order to quickly make more teachers available or people without teacher education at all might be allowed to teach classes respectively.

“The school system is 100% state funded”.

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

Most of Austrian’s schools are too, but definitely not 100%.

“All teachers in Finland must have a master’s degree, which is fully subsidized”.

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

“Teachers are selected from the top 10% of graduates”.

(Taylor 2011

<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

“In 2010, 6,600 applicants vied for 660 primary school training slots”.
(Taylor 2011
<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

This is not the case in Austria. Many teachers having received education for lower secondary schools teach in upper secondary schools as well or vice versa. Often also people without having a teacher education are allowed to teach because they gained experience in the economy, which is often seen as more important than pedagogical skills. Due to the lack of teachers as explained above the situation will become even worse.

“The national curriculum is only broad guidelines”.
(Taylor 2011
<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

In former times, I guess, this was depending on the teacher. Young teachers tend to base their teaching subjects on the curriculum in order to make sure they meet the teaching and learning requirements. After a few years of experience many teachers have found their way, they know what kind of teacher they want to be or can be and which contents they want to focus on. Then they bring extra material and more or less drift away from the curriculum's regulations. This situation will have to change with the introduction of the Centralized A-Levels. The teaching contents and requirements have to be more homogenous in order to make sure every student has the same chance to pass the standardized test.

“Teachers are effectively given the same status as doctors and lawyers”.
(Taylor 2011
<http://www.businessinsider.com/finland-education-school-2011-12?op=1>).

This is definitely not the case in Austria. The social status of teachers in Austria has been declining from generation to generation and with it the respect pupils and their parents show to teachers. While our grandparents were often afraid of a teacher's authority, the situation has changed for our parents, ourselves and even more for today's pupils.

An article about a comprehensive school in Finland shows another story, maybe the most important aspect of Finland's success. It is the teacher's attitude. The article is about a sixth-grade student, an immigrant, not meeting the learning requirements. The headmaster decided to hold the student back for a year, which is very rare in Finland. During this year the headmaster acted as his private teacher, giving individual lessons and even taking the student with him and occupying him when he was teaching other classes. In the end, the pupil

experienced learning success and was very grateful to his teacher. This is only one story which got published to demonstrate Finland's extraordinary educational work. *Whatever it takes* is said to be the Finnish teachers' motto when it comes to helping a student. This theme would be a desirable one for Austrian teachers as well, or actually for all the teachers that exist. On the other hand it is perhaps a demanding request because most teachers have families and children to raise. Obviously, such a person cannot put all his/her energy into work.

Nevertheless, an approach towards such a motto is inevitable as a first step towards a more successful education system. Finland's transformation began some 40 years ago as a measure against economical deficit. So it looks like to do likewise is probably a good idea to guide educational and economical future developments in the right direction. A factor which makes this individual work easier for Finnish teachers is the fact that there are many small schools where the teachers know each pupil personally including their abilities and achievements thus far. Austria's schools seem to be too big to have a kind of familiar atmosphere. As discussed above, even the classes are too big. Teaching in such an atmosphere lets us often forget about the human aspect and rather rely on statistics too much. (Hancock 2011

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/Why-Are-Finlands-Schools-Successful.html>)

Here is another statement by a Finnish teacher working for the headmaster introduced above, which shows that they are seeking for challenge:

“‘Children from wealthy families with lots of education can be taught by stupid teachers,’ Louhivuori said, smiling. ‘We try to catch the weak students. It’s deep in our thinking.’”

(Hancock 2011 <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/Why-Are-Finlands-Schools-Successful.html>)

So far we have learned quite a lot about Finland's education system and I have depicted several differences between their and the Austrian system, which might be the reason for their success in contrast to our failings in the PISA studies. Despite the several differences that exist between Austria and Finland, the main reason might not yet be found. Therefore, I am going to analyse a Finnish curriculum and an English course book used in Finnish upper secondary schools to check if they contain humanistic elements. If they do, we have found yet another possible reason for the nation's success, namely the implementation of humanistic language teaching, which is not done in Austria as we have found out in the investigations presented in the chapters 2.2 and 2.3 of this paper.

2.6 Finnish curriculum

The following excerpts were taken from curricula published on the Finnish National Board of Education's homepage. The passages presented are those where engagement with oneself is required in the curriculum. As a first example, an objective of upper secondary vocational education is cited:

“...recognizes and assesses his/her own learning strategies”
(Finnish National Board of Education 2013
http://www.oph.fi/download/140422_vocational_qualification_in_hotel_restaurant_and_catering_services_2010.pdf , page 165).

In order to be able to reach this learning aim, students must be given the possibility to reflect about themselves. This focus on the learners' thoughts, although this reflection rather happens at home than during a lesson, could be seen as a sign of humanistic language teaching.

The next citation expresses a similar request for students to become aware of their beliefs and was found in the formulations of general objectives of upper secondary education:

“...the ability to take other people into account and the ability to revise one's beliefs and actions as required. ... Students are to be provided with opportunities to assess different options, make choices and become aware of the direct and indirect consequences of their choices. ... Education must strengthen students' self-esteem and help them recognise their personal uniqueness. ... Students are to be encouraged to express their own observations, interpretations and aesthetic views in different ways”
(Finnish National Board of Education 2013
http://www.oph.fi/download/47678_core_curricula_upper_secondary_education.pdf ,page 26).

Although reference to self-reflection and expressing personal thoughts was found in Finnish curricula, its mention was very limited. Furthermore, the proper implementation of a humanistic approach, demands more focus on affects but terms like affective, emotion or feeling, which would more clearly point to HLT, were not included at all.

Let us now move on to a closer consideration of the course book *English United Course 5*. I want to spot its humanistic elements as well as its differences to *Focus on Modern Business 1*.

2.7 English course book used in Finland

The most striking thing about *English United Course 5* is its strong focus on arts. Scanning through the table of contents is sufficient to notice that many aspects of arts are included in this course book. Among other topics like films, paintings, photography, sculpting, music and literature in general as well as more specific genres like novels, poetry, operas and the like are discussed. Moreover, in terms of language skills, the attention is turned to writing. The content description on the spine says:

“Why is Carmen in Khayelitsha? What is a dead shark doing in an arts gallery? Will supermen⁷ survive? Can you rap around your Shakespeare? English United Course 5 guides you through the world of arts, opening not only your eyes but also your mind to the curious culture all around you. At the same time you will improve your writing skills by delving into various text types. At the end of this course a presentation or a portfolio will stand as a proof of your newly refined skills in this area. So sharpen your proverbial pencils, because the word remains mightier than the sword”
(Daffue-Karsten et al 2006).

This description very well summarises what can be found inside the book. So concerning the choice of topics an outstanding difference to the Austrian's course book, which includes themes related to one's daily life like school life, family, leisure activities and the like, is noticeable. Thus it can be assumed that talking and finding out about oneself as suggested in HLT is even less important than in Austria. It rather seems as if Finnish language teaching was aiming at imparting factual knowledge, especially cultural knowledge, to a very high extent. To back up this claim with evidence, an exercise found in *English United 5* is described in the following (Daffue-Karsten et al 2006: 56f). It trains factual knowledge and does hardly require language skills. The example exercise is about matching pictures of famous works of art and their names underneath with the artist. One must not at all understand English to fulfil this task because although the names like *Girl with a Pearl Earring* are in English, the pictures make successful fulfilment without language abilities possible. It has to be mentioned at this point that this exercise is just the kick-off to unit 5 termed *But is it art?*; all the other exercises in this unit of course do require language abilities. However, the majority of tasks in this book are set up in a way where English is needed to learn more about a specific topic rather than to talk about oneself in relation to this theme. So the Austrian course book incorporates far more phrases like *What do you think...*, *What is your opinion on...*, or simply the pronoun *you* whereas the Finnish course book authors more frequently posed questions on the topic itself

⁷ Note that the spelling derives from the original quote.

to ensure understanding of the matter rather than to provoke deeper thinking about how this affects one's own life and how one feels about it. The low number of such personal questions again leads to the conclusion that HLT principles are of minor importance in *English United 5*. Due to the fact that this book is frequently used in Finnish upper secondary schools this claim might be true for the whole educational system in Finland as well.

Another striking thing, giving no evidence for HLT preference or rejection but being a great difference to *Focus on modern business 1*, is the usage of texts. First of all there are far more and longer texts included in the Finnish course book and secondly some of them, or at least single sentences, are authentic works. For instance, the extract from act 3 of Shaw's *Pygmalion* (Daffue-Karsten et al 2006: 97ff) or the matching exercise where extracts from novels have to be matched with the title of the novel (Daffue-Karsten et al 2006: 43). All in all it can be said that although there are tasks for training all the four skills, there is a tendency to reading and writing texts. As promised in the content description on the back of this book, several writing guidelines on different text types like how to write a book review or film review can be found (Daffue-Karsten et al 2006: 41; 81).

The next remark is dedicated to the L1 use in this book. Nearly all the task descriptions are written in English. However, there are several translation exercises where Finnish sentences have to be translated into English, either word by word or analogously. The topicality and effectiveness of such exercises is questionable but the number of translation exercises in this series of books will probably decline the higher the level of English gets. The matter and the exercises' suitability for humanistic language teaching have already been discussed in chapter 1.3 of this paper.

Besides these the only content of the book which might be called humanistic is the description of how to set up a portfolio. Portfolios offer a chance to reflect on one's own learning process. By collecting and selecting texts, deeper engagement with one's own work and thus one's own thoughts is necessary. Additionally, portfolios always include self-assessment and sometimes peer-assessment in various formats.

One single element where the learner is asked to reflect is definitely not enough to call it a course book following HLT principles. Obviously, Finland as a country being successful in education does not incorporate humanistic elements either. This assumption and the insight gained from the investigation of a Finnish curriculum lead to the conclusion that HLT cannot be the reason for their success nor can its absence result in Austria's 'failure'. Again, due to the limited material under consideration, this claim cannot be seen as highly meaningful.

2.8 Finnish people's views on their own education system

It seems reasonable to conclude that humanistic language teaching is not Finland's secret to educational success as there are no humanistic elements in the frequently used English course book. But the concept which we have seen to be similar to HLT could be the reason, namely the notion to understand English as a lingua franca. In the last decade since ELF has been introduced, several studies have been undertaken to investigate English teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the changing role of English. Timmis (2002) and Muray (2003) are just two examples of scholars who conducted studies with non-native speakers of English in a variety of countries. Their findings differed in some way but on the whole they found that teachers as well as learners tend to prefer a standardized native-speaker English as a model for teaching. Although many of the participants have realised the recent changes English has undergone their thinking has not yet shifted. For Murray it is clear that the only ones who will have the power to cause new thinking will be the non-native speakers. In spite of these negative results, negative at least for ELF supporters, which show that the English speaking world is not yet ready for a paradigm shift, there is still hope. A survey carried out with Finnish teachers and students of English showed a more positive attitude towards using a non-native speaker model for teaching. Due to the high presence of English in the Finnish media, the language is seen of having quite a high importance although it is not a national language. This exposure happens daily and takes various forms and varieties of English. Additionally, many companies have chosen English to be their official language for business. The frequent encounter with the language in their free time made students draw a distinction between English at school and English in the real world. The change became obvious from the 1960's onwards. Back then there was still an emphasis on teaching according to a native-speaker model whereas first statements towards a conceptual shift could have been noticed in the curriculum. However, as we have already realised, a new definition of the concept without accompanying actions takes us no further. So the trend of seeing English as the English people's property continued for a few decades. However, nowadays the anticipated change seems to have become more possible.

When examined by Ranta (2010) it was discovered that throughout English interactions 62% of all speech events by non-native speakers are ELF situations. Almost that total, namely 61%, think that they will probably use more English with other non-native speakers in the future. When questioned in relation to attitude towards certain varieties of English the results showed that 70% of all the student participants do not have a preferential

variety when it comes to their own use of English. This means, learners do not want to imitate native-speaker speech. This can also be deduced from the following quotations:

“I speak in my own way – imitating varieties often sounds ridiculous. From the intelligibility point of view, I haven’t perceived it necessary to stick to any variety”. (Ranta 2010: 163)

“Why should I choose a certain variety? It would sound stupid if a non-Finnish speaker tried to imitate my dialect”. (Ranta 2010: 163)

“I don’t consider it relevant. I don’t want people to associate me with a particular nationality”. (Ranta 2010: 163)

I myself consider such statements as a sign that the conceptual shift has already started. Learning English is no longer seen as imitating the owners of the language but as an important means of communication with people having different L1’s. However, questions which have found their way into the classroom to find out to what extent these assumptions about non-native speaker use of English are not fully satisfactory. On the one hand, 79% of students are convinced that the current way of language teaching enables them to independently use the language after school life, on the other hand, 67% denounce the strong focus on grammar and course book English. They think teachers should rather pay more attention to communicative abilities than to grammatical correctness. This inconsistency in their answers, namely wanting a stronger focus on communication but still being content with grammar based teaching, could have a variety of reasons. One could be the possible situation of students being so used to and coined by this teaching style that they can hardly imagine a different one. Furthermore, there seems to be quite a strong division between *school-English* and *real life-English*. Many students might have realised and accepted the difference and therefore do not see an urge in combining the two. One could infer that this difference was drawn by the students themselves in order to find an explanation for the discrepancy between the language they learn at school and the language they experience and need in their free time. The definition of *two Englishes* works as a kind of excuse for this discrepancy and to a certain extent protects institutional language teaching from critique. It needs to be said at this point that this difference should not exist if effective communication skills are considered to be learning outcomes. However, it seems obvious that people automatically develop a positive attitude towards things they succeed in rather than emphasise the incongruities. Therefore Finnish people do not criticise their educational system too much because of the good results Finland gains in studies like PISA.

So with regard to the results of this survey Finnish students are well aware of the language's changing role and have a positive attitude towards non-native varieties. Nevertheless, from their point of view ELF is not yet implemented during language lessons.

The following paragraph concentrates on teacher participants' answers.

Whereas the majority of teachers indicated that they communicate with both, native and non-native speakers, they think that their students will more often communicate with non-native speakers in the future. Although the teachers obviously have experience with ELF and also predict this kind of language use for their pupils they naturally follow a native speaker model, preferably British English. The reason for this seems to be the same reason why learners are satisfied with the teaching methods practiced at school although they know that they are not always helpful in real life – because they are just used to it, it has been tradition over a long period of time. A deep conviction of referring to a native speaker model cannot be the case because replies to the question what important message about English they want to pass on to their pupils often included the theme ELF. More than half of the 58 different answers wanted to convey the importance of English's lingua franca role in the world or take away the fear of making mistakes. Here are some examples of teachers' answers:

“There is no one ‘right’ variety or way of using the language – the courage to communicate is essential”. (Ranta 2010: 169)

“English is a universal language that is spoken and understood almost everywhere. No need to be afraid of errors”. (Ranta 2010: 169)

“The most important thing is to seek mutual understanding”. (Ranta 2010: 169)

As we can see, the stated examples including words like *no one right variety* and *international language* points towards an ELF orientation of Finnish teachers. The replies to the following questions of the questionnaire are also instances for seeing English as a lingua franca. The majority of teachers agreed that there should not be the one model in upper secondary school English teaching. In accordance to this answer, 76% of the participating teachers indicated to occasionally including a variety other than British or American English into their lessons. Additionally, this notion is also shown by the following quotes:

“We aim at the best possible production but that does not mean speaking like an educated native speaker”. (Ranta 2010: 172)

“Students should get acquainted with the lingua franca idea already at school. Native speakers are perhaps more valuable models for the teachers themselves”. (Ranta 2010: 172)

These quotes do not only suggest a positive attitude towards ELF but here the term *lingua franca* was even literally used.

Surprisingly, the answer to another question given by 47% of all the teacher probands was absolutely not in accordance with the notion of language teaching the Finnish teachers seemed to have after having read their replies so far. The statement they were asked to agree or disagree on was about whether students should be taught to consistently use only one variety of English in their speaking and writing. Nearly half of the respondents agreed. This result shows the same phenomenon we have already experienced with Finnish students. Finland's teachers tend to be supporters of the ELF concept but do not yet follow its principles in their teaching. The reason for this might be extensive but a major one could be standardized tests, for which a preparation according to a NS norm seems more effective. This matter has already been discussed in more detail in chapter 2.1.

The remainder of this paper is dedicated to the notion just introduced, English as a *lingua franca*.

3 English as a Lingua Franca

The next section will introduce an alternative way to HLT of thinking about language teaching. This time, the humanism does not manifest itself in the kind of exercises teachers choose or to what extent they involve their pupils, but how they treat the language itself. Until now it was treated as a predetermined notion, which it is closely as possible approached as. Language proficiency was equalised with approximation to native speakers' syntax, lexis, phonetics and pragmatics. This made them serve as a role model with regards to language use and influences English teaching. In recent years the call for rethinking this approach has arisen. First of all it is said the multitude of dialects and sociolects as well as the many official languages like Irish English make it impossible to determine a standard variety of English. In the area of pronunciation, for instance, even though we disregard all the rest and appoint the well accepted standard, the PR (Received Pronunciation), as our model for speaking and teaching, this is not very satisfactory either, namely in terms of practicality. According to Jenkins (2003: 29) RP, seen as a prestige variety, is only actually spoken by a minority of people. So why teach this exactly? There seems to be a contradiction in the notion that on the one hand it aims at native speaker appropriation due to reasons of comprehensibility and on the other hand chooses one of the least spoken varieties. At this point it becomes obvious that teaching towards THE standard version of a language – as it is mainly done in Austria, where pupils learn RP – is neither fully possible nor efficient.

Another point of critique is the fact that it actually does not matter how native speakers speak because most of us and our pupils will not talk to one ever in their life anyway. The majority of all the conversation done in English is between non-native speakers . Here the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) comes in. As explained by Seidlhofer (2005) the term refers to situations in which English

“is chosen as the means of communication among people from *different* first language backgrounds” (Seidlhofer 2005: 339).

Of course, the term can also be used for referring to conversations including native speakers taking part but commonly it describes conversations where English is the contact language between people sharing neither mother tongue nor culture. (Seidlhofer 2005: 339) Therefore NS (native speaker) approximation for people using English primarily for NNS (non-native speaker) talk seems redundant. They should be allowed to neglect certain language features which are not important for intelligibility or change and adapt the language

according to their needs. The paradox is that although the English language is shaped by both, native speakers as well as non-native speakers, native speakers are often still seen as the custodians of it (Seidlhofer 2005: 339). This is what the concept of understanding English as a lingua franca tries to change. ELF indeed belongs to nobody and therefore shaping can more easily happen without judgement. These changes do not threaten NS English, nor must one fear the loss of the English culture because we are not talking about English as such but about English AS a lingua franca.

Furthermore, Michael Swan (2012) points out that the more people using ELF does not necessarily mean the more it will change. There might be more non-native speakers amongst all the people using English but time-wise native speakers use it more. He assumes that this unhomogeneous group of ELF speakers, although they are powerful, do not have enough power to change a language. This means it seems unlikely that the changes ELF speakers conduct, whether they are consciously or unconsciously, have any impact on native speaker speech. (Swan 2012: 387)

What should not be done is to entitle ELF as separate variety of English. Although its speakers could be located geographically, they do not form a stable, homogenous group with similar identities. On the contrary, ELF includes all the cultural backgrounds there might be among speakers, whether it be L1 or L2 speakers. Alessia Cogo (2012: 98) uses a term already present in previous publications, for instance, by Seidlhofer (2007) and calls this group of speakers a *community of practice*. Furthermore, a variety would need some core features which are not given with ELF. One cannot decide what patterns of language are typical for ELF because it is simply not a question of deciding and creating something but of individual use. (Cogo 2012: 97-104)

The idea that ELF is a grouping of different resources that form the language is expounded by some. This idea of a virtual language is also taken up by Widdowson. He argues that the spread of a language always implies a transformation because it is not a stable set of encoded form that gets transmitted but a virtual language which is exploited for different purposes. He further writes that it is exactly this changeability that saves the communicative value of a language and also language proficiency is characterised by the ability to change and adapt structures to one's own needs. This deviation from the standard is more easily excepted in professional talk where the use of technical terms is common than in every-day talk (Widdowson 2003: 40ff). Dewey (2007: 332ff) even suggests that we should forget about the geographical centre of ELF and rather consider it as set of virtual resources.

Let us come back to our notion of variety. Seidlhofer (2001: 133-58 referred to in Kuo 2006: 214) does not call it a variety either but in her view codification would be worth considering. She calls for the compilation of dictionaries to establish a standard and gain legitimacy. She must be convinced that there are core features of ELF which would build the content of her suggested dictionaries.

Swan is wondering what this content might be. In his article *ELF and EFL: are they really different?* (2012) he has indeed compiled a list of the core features of ELF but at the same time expresses his uncertainty whether these features are really used frequently enough by the majority of speakers to be called characteristic features instead of common mistakes of learners. Here is a copy of his list:

- “Third-person singular present tense forms without final -s
 - Use of either relative *who* or *which* for both personal and impersonal reference
 - Use of articles in ways that differ from NS practice
 - NNS lexico-grammatical patterning (e.g. *I want that you listen to me; Let’s discuss about this*)
 - NNS countability assignments (e.g. *informations, an advice*)”.
- (Swan 2012: 386)

Moreover, he asks himself if those features might change in the future and if the language was used like this to fulfil a certain communicative purpose or due to limited language abilities. More research needs to be done to be able to answer his questions. Concerning the variety issues discussed above, Swan agrees with those rejecting the idea of terming ELF as a variety of English because although ELF speakers do not conform to NS norm, they do not conform to their own norms either (if there are norms at all) and this, for him, is a crucial characteristic of varieties. If at all, one might call it a “range of varieties” (Swan 2012: 385).

Widdowson (2012) does not concern himself with the question whether or not ELF is a variety of English because there are not such things as distinct speech communities or varieties of a language. It just feels convenient to classify the world and that is why we act as if they were there. According to him, not only speech communities and varieties of language are fictional but language as such because it is not yet embedded in a social context. He believes that everything we experience needs to be related to the abstract construct of language in order to make communication possible. Our thoughts and emotions, in turn, are concrete but can only be verbally expressed and receive meaning by the fictional concept of language. It seems obvious that this abstract concept of language cannot remain the same and still be appropriate although the world changes. We need to question its validity from

time to time, especially in an era where globalisation and hence change is so present. Widdowson expresses it like this:

“When purposes and circumstances change, when English gets globalized as a lingua franca and becomes common property, and thus a means of expressing other cultural values, other identities, then there is the obvious need to adapt our representations of reality”(Widdowson 2012: 19).

But however this abstraction is defined, he welcomes the shift in research away from it towards data of actual usage.

3.1 Arguments against ELF

Kuo's (2006) article obviously reveals that he is a strong opponent of ELF. He sees native speaker models as complete and convenient starting points without the force of full approximation. Furthermore, for him, language learning should have more aims than plain intelligibility. He argues that this reduced version of the language misses literacy, aesthetic concerns and does not serve for social functions like self-image, self-identity and personal voice. Learning only the most important aspects of English will never enable its speakers to express themselves accurately. Responding to this critique Cogo (2012: 102) mentions in her article ELF's richness which shows in the playfulness and creativity speakers establish when using the language in their own way.

Nevertheless, a study Kuo (2006) conducted clearly shows that most NNS are interested in approaching a NS model anyway due to the situation that pronunciation problems, strong accents, an unsuitable word choice or wrong grammar lead to misunderstandings. Being in a group of NNS they normally turn to the teacher for language issues because they know that the other group members also make mistakes, which they do not want to incorporate into their own speech. It has been said by one of the participants that they sometimes but not always correct each other and that there is no feeling of improvement without the teacher.

Subsequent he states examples of learners whose aims go beyond intelligibility. He mentions the international and national competitions in the professional and educational field which language learning has to prepare you for. How to express politeness and condolences in different languages as well as a certain degree of mastery will open many doors. Basically, he just wants to prove ELF's usefulness using examples of business people

corresponding in English and students studying abroad. In my point of view, these examples are inappropriate because one of ELF's underlying assumptions is the interplay of learners' needs and teaching content. So if a learner needs exact NS-based learning input, he/she will get it. But the majority of English learners will get along with a less NS-like version.

Next, Kuo writes about individuality which he claims to find in the approach of teaching towards NS norms. Native speaker English can promptly be taught because the learners will not feel forced to take up a foreign identity anyway. In the end it is their decision how to use the acquired contents. (Kuo 2006: 213-21)

Sung (2013) takes in a position between followers of ELF and opponents like Kuo. He carried Kuo's idea about individuality and identity a bit further and thought about what specific accent to choose for teaching. He came to the conclusion that this question is not important because he grants learners the ability to chose their preferred accent and vary it in different situations. Even if the teacher provides them with NS-like speech, the learners will, consciously or unconsciously, vary their degree of approximation. They will automatically talk more inaccurate, perhaps with an Austrian-English accent (if their L1 is Austrian), in casual situations. He sees this as a natural expression of identity due to the strong link he believes to be between the two. (Sung 2013).

Especially in specialist domains people create their own variety. Then they can be a member without getting into any conflicts of loyalty because of the switching. (Widdowson 1982:13)

This notion of accent and identity conforms to Kramsch and Sullivan's work on *Appropriate pedagogy* (1996). They claim that although there is globalisation which reduces, besides others, linguistic boundaries, there are still local conditions speakers have to face. Therefore, the same teaching material cannot be used by different speech communities. The distribution of material should rather function like a market place where there is exchange and individual adaptation afterwards (Kramsch & Sullivan 1996: 199-211)

3.2 Suggestions for teaching ELF

Again, as with HLT, an important issue to tackle is the implementation of this theory. Having a concept in mind is not enough for the purpose of improving language teaching, neither are recommendations following the values of the concept. What is needed are more precise descriptions of how it might work in practise. There is still more research needed for being able to properly define the syllabus, teaching material, approach and method,

assessment criteria, knowledge base of teachers and what teacher education should look like. However, this should not result in a list of what and what not to teach but simply the understanding of the relationship of teaching models and the variable nature of language in interaction. This insight will help to “make informed decisions about the significance of ELF to the own teaching context” (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey 2011: 306)

One step previous to teaching ELF in all its facets, whether it be grammar, syntax or phonology, and crucial for its success, is awareness raising. Awareness raising in the sense of why shall I learn/teach English as a lingua franca, why shall I give preference to an entirely new concept and not carry on with one that sufficed over so many years. Teachers who choose to teach ELF seem to be convinced by its necessity anyway. Nevertheless, constant reassurance in the form of awareness raising activities will help them to advocate it as the assumption that the only correct English is native speaker-like English runs deep. Furthermore, it serves as a first step for teachers who did not choose it themselves but who were ordered to change their teaching style according to new findings. In order to be able to meet ELF’s teaching requirements, a change in one’s perception of how languages are learned effectively needs to precede. The same goes for students. Many might take up a resisting attitude towards the new concept as a result of a lifelong custom of other values. In short, some kind of awareness raising should always be conducted with all the people concerned with the new idea if it has not yet made the transition from theory into practice, which is the case with ELF. Although people recognise that changes due to globalisation make ELF necessary, its implementation into pedagogy has not happened yet. However, Gillian Mansfield and Franca Poppi suggest corpora to be useful tools for awareness raising exercises. In their article *The English as a Foreign Language / Lingua Franca Debate: Sensitising Teachers of English as a Foreign Language Towards Teaching English as a Lingua Franca* (2012) they stress the point that keeping one’s own identity is more important than imitating native speakers in their way of communicating, behaviour and attitudes. The value of identity might be shown by letting learners identify linguistic features of newspaper articles. They shall notice how different newspapers vary their style of writing according to the suspected readership. The selection of contents, the general style, the degree of formality and proximity is highly dependent on who might read the text and by whom it was written. This implicates that the English speakers, for example, are not a homogenous community but a group of people having individual identities. Other ideas they present for the initial stage of ELF, focusing on diversity, are exercises which are conducted with the help of corpora. First,

pupils should do a quantitative analysis to find out frequently used words by newspapers. Afterwards, they have to analyse the surrounding words and thus find out collocations. The amount and variety of used collocations ranging from correct to strictly speaking incorrect ones shall raise the learners' awareness of how individually a language can be used, or more precisely, is used. (Mansfield & Poppi 2012: 159ff)

Yet before we are in the position to work out promising teaching methods and techniques, we need to clearly define goals and desired outcomes. So where shall our teaching lead to? Sandra Lee McKay (2012) defined three major goals for teaching English as an international language. These can be taken over for our ELF concept but have to be supplemented with individual goals formulated by the learner. McKay's suggestions for suitable goals are the following: First she advises teachers to distinguish between linguistic variations that cause problems in intelligibility from those that may result in negative attitudes towards the ELF speaker. Obviously, the teaching should focus on extinguishing the first type of linguistic differences. The second type does not need to be addressed in the teaching of linguistic competence that much. Instead it should be made clear that a certain change of the language is the natural consequence of language use. EIL (English as an International Language) or ELF learners really need to be convinced of this in order to repress a negative attitude towards linguistic deviations and their speakers.

The second teaching goal derives from the field of pragmatics. The learners should be equipped with interaction strategies like seeking for clarification and establishing rapport. Those shall help them to overcome cultural differences so that there is no need to imitate the pragmatic rules of other cultures anymore.

Lastly, what she considers as important are writing and reading skills to be able to access and contribute to all the written information that is available out there. Here again, the aim is not to develop native speaker-like abilities but to make sense of a text and to find out that cultural factors do play a role in the course of approaching a text (McKay 2002: 127f).

According to Swan (2012) any other aims which one might wish to add must not be too high. Otherwise giving up is likely or students avoid communicating in order to avoid making mistakes. This phenomenon is already known in the field of education and is called "fehlerfreies Schweigen". (Swan 2012: 383)

Nevertheless, for me, the main principle of ELF is the preference to fluency over accuracy. I share this insight with Widdowson (2013: 22f). A teacher giving preference to a student who has all the declarative knowledge but cannot turn it into procedural knowledge

has definitely not grasped the underlying notion of teaching English as a lingua franca. Students who fail to produce norm-based language but nevertheless communicate effectively should serve as models for other learners. What exactly do they do? What makes their communication effective? Widdowson claims that they refer to their own language:

“I would suggest that, primed by the experience of their own language, learners quite naturally focus attention on what is functionally salient, give intuitive priority to what is feasible and appropriate, and filter out linguistic features that are surplus to communicative requirement. In short, they develop their own functional grammar” (Widdowson 2013: 22).

This filtering and selecting lets conclude that students do not learn what is taught but rather make their own version out of it; they develop a so called “interlanguage” (Widdowson 2013: 22).

Moreover, this shifting away from teaching goals towards learning goals seems to reduce the importance of teaching content and material. Based loosely on Seidlhofer (2011: 201), the nature of input and teaching material is not as crucial as the question of what teachers and learners make out of it.

Having now defined appropriate goals, we can get a bit more specific and consider possible ways of reaching those. Sharifian (2009) came up with a suggestion of practical teaching contents. He writes that ELF teaching should include repair work, which is asking for clarification, repetition and rephrasing; conversational gambits such as turn-taking, back channelling and initiating topics. Additionally, students will need negotiation strategies, which means, the ability of suggesting alternatives, arguing for a particular approach and seeking consensus. (Sharifian 2009: 239)

I want to continue with further recommendations by Seidlhofer (2011). She proposes the active teaching of

“... close and active listening (cf. Lynch 2009), communicative awareness, such as gauging one’s interlocutor’s linguistic resources, ‘letting pass’ (Firth 1996), various interaction strategies such as indicating understanding or non-understanding, regulating backchannel behaviour, asking for repetition, paraphrasing, avoiding ‘unilateral idiomaticity’, giving preference to ‘transparent’ expressions, being explicit, exploiting or adding redundancy, and attending to non-verbal communication” (Seidlhofer 2011: 205)

The next step would be to get even more explicit and clearly define what is meant by those umbrella terms. For example, how exactly could I make myself explicit? Which phrases could I use and how could those be taught?

There is still a lot of research needed to answer such specific questions and in the course of it one thing should be kept in mind: teaching content and design of activities is not only an open question but a local one, too. Although we often have to think globally, due to the globalisation, with reference to teaching content and design we need to incorporate a learner's personal living condition. *Learning* and *using* should not be seen separately but as equal components of the process towards a learner's goal, may it be native-speaker proficiency in the language or not (Seidlhofer 2011: 202).

Teaching implications deriving from the notion of ELF are not yet fully developed as not many scholars have taken this step of explicitly describing a sample lesson. But a few pioneers at least have published their thoughts. One of those research books providing ready-made activities, of course open for adaptation, is *Teaching the Pronunciation of English as a lingua franca* by Robin Walker (2010). Studying the literature, many authors argue for a language user's individual use of vocabulary, collocations and grammar. However, a NNS-like pronunciation should at least be regarded as an equally important facet of ELF. One teaching method he suggests in his book is the use of drills, although they are often seen as outdated and replaced by methods deriving from more communicative approaches. For him, tongue twisters, rhymes and songs count as drills and are an effective way of training one's sound production. Again, the drills' purpose must not be about NS-approximation but demolishing misunderstandings among non-native speakers with strong accents. Secondly, he recommends minimal pair exercises. For those it is important to know a language user's L1 in order to decide what is relevant for him or her to practise. German speaking people, for example, often struggle with the distinction between /v/ and /w/, whereas Brazilian learners need familiarisation in contrasting /h/ and /r/. If the kind of problem concerning pronunciation is once identified, the teacher or the learner can make up exercises including words which only differ from each other in those specific sounds only, words like house – rouse. Moving away from the distinction and accurate pronunciation of vowels and consonants, which is only a small part of teaching phonology, he further recommends the integration of teaching vowel length or stress into the teaching of vocabulary and lexical phrases. For example, the simple phrase declaring approval, I think you are right, can be understood in at least four different ways:

“I think you're RIGHT (i.e. unmarked stress) = an expression of general agreement.
I think YOU'RE right (contrastive stress) = I agree with you but, not with the other people.

I THINK you're right (contrastive stress) = I agree, but I still have certain doubts.
I think you're right (contrastive stress on 'I') = I agree with you even though the others don't"
(Walker 2010: 145).

Any sentence will suit for such an exercise, which, on top, requires hardly any preparation.

But what does all this have to do with humanistic English teaching? It correlates in so far as teaching Lingua Franca English often accounts to a greater extent for non-native speakers' needs than a standardised NS model of English. It involves pupils in the process of teaching and learning and therefore can, on any account, be considered as humanistic. Teachers are free to neglect certain features of the language which they feel are redundant to their learners. This spotlights the individuals more than any other approach because it is not how the language is approached that is adapted but the language itself.

3.3 A study of Finnish textbooks according to ELF principles

This section is meant to point to a study of Finnish textbooks conducted by Anne Kivistö (2005) from the University of Tampere, Finland. She examined the books *Culture Café* and *In Touch*, in each case course 1-5. But unlike the study I conducted and documented in chapter 2.7 she concentrated on their suitability for teaching English as a lingua franca. Her main concern was to compare the proportion of NS and NNS tape records. She found that the majority of listening comprehensions were recorded in RP, followed by GA. Concerning the non-native accents, the Finnish accents was used the most. This is due to the fact that the books were compiled for Finnish learners. Other accents found in those two series were African, Indian, Jamaican, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish. This seems quite a wide variety of accents but the prominence they enjoy in relation to RP or GA is very low (less than quarter of an hour versus two to four hours). For the exact figures consult *Accents of English as a Lingua Franca: a Study of Finnish Textbooks* (Kivistö 2005: 49). The study shows the minor importance of NNS accents and was meant as a call for more incorporation of those. However, there are several points of critique, brought forward by teachers and students, which clearly show the preference of a native speaker model. Firstly, there is said to be confusion amongst learners about which model of accent to follow. Secondly, the exposure of different accents is considered to have potential for racism. Thirdly,

due to financial and temporal restraints, several accents are imitated by actors anyway. Lastly, in exams mostly NS models are used so sticking to those in regular lessons serves as good exam preparation. It becomes clear that course book publishers, often seen as gatekeepers of traditional text book design, do orientate themselves on language assessment and this in turn follows the curriculum. So as well as the needs of learners, teachers and administrators influence each other and the curriculum. The curriculum, assessment and teaching material are dependent on each other and a change in the curriculum must be the starting point if we want to achieve a reformation in the language teaching system (Kivistö 2005).

Nevertheless, the notion of ELF does not manifest itself in the number of different accents used in one course book. The aim should not be to expose students to everything there is in the world but to account for their needs. A proper needs analyses and the informed selection of certain accents is definitely more fruitful than massive exposure.

Conclusion

The influential teaching approach termed humanistic language teaching used from the 1970's onwards has lost its prominence in recent years. Nevertheless, many parallels can be found between HLT and ELF, a concept experts are currently debating. My overall aim was to introduce the first and show that parts of it are still used for a new way of defining language teaching.

To finalise this paper I want to reconstruct the chain of thought which brought me from one chapter to the next. In the beginning of the paper I tried to illustrate how humanistic language teaching can be understood. For this I picked Earl W. Stevick, Gertrude Moskowitz and Wil Knibbeler and contrasted their notions of HLT. At this point a word of caution was necessary not to confuse HLT with holistic language teaching. Next, I discussed several drawbacks of the approach but could counter most of them with its advantages. As a plain description can never be enough for pedagogic purposes, another point under consideration was the approach's specific teaching implications, which I presented by realised sample lessons. Nevertheless, my investigation of the Austrian curriculum and a school book suggests that nowadays HLT does not enjoy high prominence within the Austrian education system. A consultation of PISA's results reveals that Austria is far less successful in the field of education than other many nations. In order to check if the lack of humanism in our schools is the reason for it, I have analysed Finland's approach towards teaching and learning because Finnish students are seen as the most successful ones. Again, their curriculum and one course book has been under close scrutiny but no humanistic elements could be found. This led me to the conclusion that the reasons must lie elsewhere as it can definitely not be the presence or absence of HLT.

The remainder of my paper is dedicated to the presentation of the nature and implications for teaching English as a lingua franca. This has been done because this notion might become a new teaching approach in the years to come.

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Appendix

Abstract

My study *Finding a place for humanistic English teaching in Austrian's upper secondary schools* aimed at demonstrating that important aspects of humanistic language teaching (HLT) remain present through the pedagogical implementation of understanding English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

The examination of resource books by well-established scholars like Stevick and Moskowitz as well as Seidlhofer and McKay let me establish a proper definition of the two notions and notice their parallels. Both notions put the learners and their individual needs at the centre of teaching.

Moreover, the analysis of curricula and course books revealed the inexistence of humanistic elements and mirrors their unimportance in the educational system nowadays. However, the developing notion of ELF in professional circles might bring back those elements into English language teaching. So, to refer to the title of my study, there is no place for HLT at present but the future realisation of ELF in our classrooms could serve as one.

Furthermore, as the investigation of PISA results and the Finnish education system showed, the implementation of humanistic elements is not a determiner for the educational success of a nation and thus not the reason for Austria's unsatisfactory PISA results. However, humanistic elements in language teaching are not rejected. On the contrary, they are adapted to current social conditions and form main components of the developing concept of ELF. HLT's value is still obvious, solely its implementation changed.

My study was intended to make readers aware of the importance of seemingly outdated approaches for the development of more and more effective English teaching.

Abstract in German

Mit meiner Forschung *Finding a place for humanistic English teaching in Austrian's upper secondary schools* habe ich es mir zur Aufgabe gemacht, aufzuzeigen, dass Elemente des humanistischen Lehrens (HLT), obwohl heutzutage wenig anerkannt, doch zielführend im Englisch-Unterricht eingesetzt werden können.

Bei der Herangehensweise Englisch als sogenannte lingua franca (ELF) zu verstehen, können pädagogische Konzepte abgeleitet werden, die solche Elemente erhalten. Bezugnehmend auf Publikation von Fachspezialisten wie, zum Beispiel, Stevick und Moskowitz in Bereich des Humanistic Language Teaching sowie Seidlhofer und McKay im Bereich des Lingua Franca Englisch, konnten grundlegende Komponente und Parallelen ausgearbeitet werden. Die Hauptparallele zwischen HLT und ELF ist die Berücksichtigung der individuellen Bedürfnisse eines Lernenden in Hinblick auf Sprachgebrauch.

Die Analyse von Lehrplänen und Schulbüchern zeigt das Nichtvorhandensein solcher Elemente auf und spiegelt zugleich die Unwichtigkeit jener im heutigen Bildungssystem wieder. Das sich gerade entwickelnde Konzept des ELF könnte jene Elemente wieder in den Englisch-Unterricht zurück bringen und in Zukunft den von mir gesuchten Platz für HLT darstellen.

Weiters wurde eine Untersuchung der PISA Ergebnisse sowie des finnischen Bildungssystems vorgenommen, welche verdeutlicht, dass die Abwesenheit humanistischer Elemente nicht für die wenig zufriedenstellenden Ergebnisse Österreichs in der PISA-Studie verantwortlich ist. Dennoch scheinen sie in angepasster Weise wieder Hauptkomponente des ELF-Ansatzes zu sein.

Ziel meiner Studie war es, den Leser auf die Wichtigkeit veralteter Unterrichtsansätzen zur Ausarbeitung neuer, immer effektiverer Konzepte des Englischlehrens hinzuweisen.

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